



# THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

This thesis has been submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for a postgraduate degree (e.g. PhD, MPhil, DClinPsychol) at the University of Edinburgh. Please note the following terms and conditions of use:

- This work is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, which are retained by the thesis author, unless otherwise stated.
- A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge.
- This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the author.
- The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author.
- When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given.

Teacher Appraisal

Laurence McAlindin

University of Edinburgh

MEd Degree

1995



## Abstract

A study of teacher appraisal and its adoption from what is seen by many in education as a quite alien occupational culture - the world of commerce and industry, where appraisal systems have existed for many years. The study takes an historical view of the introduction and expansion of performance appraisal schemes in industry and examines alternative appraisal systems being introduced to enhance employee involvement and commitment.

The question of quality in education and discussion about standards and excellence in schools, as well as the political concern about value for money, has brought about an acceptance of the introduction of appraisal systems for teachers. However, there has never been so much rapid change in education as in the last few years and the timing of the introduction of teacher appraisal has been questioned by many.

The research investigates the chequered history of teacher appraisal in England and Wales and also examines the more recent record of staff development and appraisal in Scottish education. It also looks at the adoption and implementation of the Scottish Office Education Department's appraisal training programme in Lothian Region and presents the results of a questionnaire survey of some of the appraised teachers in that Region. The results of the survey indicate an appreciation of opportunities created by the introduction of an appraisal system closely linked to staff development and an indication that appraisal has led to a greater coherence in schools with improvements to communication.

The analysis argues that the world of education has learned from the quality and quantity of staff training and development in industry, adopting comprehensive, top-down systems of staff appraisal. The introduction of appraisal systems has resulted in an awareness of changing attitudes and needs among many teachers and educational establishments. Preparation for appraisal and staff development is popularising the use of structured approaches to professional development and other schemes encouraged in industry to help with the management of change and the provision of a quality service

The study observes that, in industry, the emphasis, more and more, is on flattened hierarchies, teamwork, continuous improvement and valuing the individual. The key to good teacher appraisal, therefore, is to take the best of business practice, without losing sight of the educational vision. Although the survey concludes with a positive response from the respondents to the benefits of teacher appraisal in Lothian, the most recent signs are that appraisal of teachers in Scotland will not be a priority after Regional Reorganisation in April 1996.

### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following people for their assistance and cooperation in the research for this dissertation:

Wyn Brogan, Mary Toner, Peter McCourt, Alice Bertram, Tom McMillan, Bob McPherson of British Telecom and all the members of Lothian Teaching Staff who completed and returned a questionnaire.

I also thank Antonia Schreuder McAlindin for access to the library of the Institute for Personnel and Development and for the months of patience shown while I completed the research.

## Contents

Chapter 1	Introduction
Chapter 2	Appraisal systems in industry
Chapter 3	Appraisal in education
Chapter 4	Staff development and appraisal
Chapter 5	SOED appraisal training
Chapter 6	Methodology
Chapter 7	Results of questionnaire
Chapter 8	Discussion of the findings

### Appendices

### Bibliography

### Tables:

Staff who returned questionnaire, 6.1, page 47

Interview lengths, 7.1, page 53

Professional development, 7.2, page 55

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### **Teacher appraisal**

For schools and teachers informal appraisal is not a new concept but what **is** new is the introduction of a compulsory system of performance review. Between 1992 and 1994, all 430000 teachers in England and Wales have been appraised by law and mostly for the first time and, with the concurrent introduction of an appraisal system in Scotland, there is no avoiding the issue. This study reviews the recent history of the framework for schoolteacher appraisal and examines the significance of this development in the UK.

#### *Reasons for research*

Current proposals for the appraisal of teachers are part of a much wider demand for accountability. Whenever money is spent, there is a concern among those who give it, or their representatives, to see that there is a proper account. It is recognised in our society that although unemployment affects all levels of qualifications, it particularly affects the vulnerable - those with no qualifications or very few. In many cases education means employment and, therefore, there is considerable public interest in getting the best.

The question of quality in education and discussion about standards and excellence in schools, as well as the political concern about value for money, has brought about an acceptance of the introduction of appraisal systems for teachers. Some of the difficulties associated with their introduction, however, are concerned with the underlying purpose: is appraisal connected with promotion, dismissal and other aspects of control, or is it concerned with staff development?

## *Educational significance*

There has never been so much rapid change in education as in the last few years. In 1983 the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Report *Compulsory Schooling in a Changing World* made the following statement about the crucial role of teachers:

Given the advent of falling enrolment and increasing pressures for changes in the curriculum and the governance of schools, it will be particularly difficult during the next decade to maintain the morale and the competence of the teaching force. Many teachers will find themselves under double stress. On the one hand they will naturally feel disturbed if there are cut-backs to recruitment, blocks on promotion and talk of competency tests, and redundancies in the air. On the other hand they will be exposed to increasing pressure to diversify their functions, to modify their teaching styles, to cope with new curriculum demands, and to relinquish some of their long-established autonomy.

(OECD, 1983)

The timing of the introduction of teacher appraisal, therefore, and its adoption from what is seen by many teachers as a quite alien occupational culture, has been questioned by many in the pedagogical world.

Appraisal systems have been part of industry and commerce for many years and the language of industry, with its identification of performance indicators, formation of action plans and accountability of employees, is now clearly recognised in the world of education. Some teachers get worried about such terminology, fearing that if they use such words then they must start using children as if they were nuts and bolts.

Other educators wonder if the ethos of industrial management, which is primarily concerned with selling more products, is appropriate to schools. They argue that schools are acquiring the same "entrepreneurial spirit" by using performance management practices and that teachers are more than facilitators, technicians or civil servants; they still see themselves as professionals, engaged essentially in the teaching of children.

Is the adoption of staff appraisal from the world of industry and commerce a "DIY inspection scheme", as Iain Thorburn described it (Thorburn, 1994), designed simply, if expensively, to keep teachers on their toes, and impose administrative burdens that are discharged at the expense of precious teaching time? Is what Education Authorities claim to be passing on to schools through appraisal training being received by teachers in schools? Are quality assurance and supportive self-evaluation to be found at the heart of such training and will the subsequent involvement in a staff appraisal scheme ensure and enhance the quality of learning and teaching in schools?

### **Summary of chapters and literature review**

Chapter 2 takes an historical view of the introduction and expansion of performance appraisal schemes in both the private and public sectors in recent years in the UK. It discusses what is considered to be effective appraisal, noting that comprehensive appraisal systems, covering both performance and development, are becoming the norm. It examines alternative appraisal systems being introduced in industry to enhance employee involvement and commitment. The library of the Institute of Personnel and Development (IPD), formerly the Institute of Personnel Management (IPM) proved to be an invaluable source of journal articles and company examples relevant to this part of the study.

Chapter 3 is a study of the chequered history of teacher appraisal in England and Wales. Back in 1985, Sir Keith Joseph stated that, although he recognised appraisal went on already, he wanted it done on a formal basis. His wish to sack incompetent teachers (Wragg, 1994) led to threats of a boycott, but the 1986 Education Act made appraisal a legal requirement.

Pilot schemes followed and John MacGregor deferred formal implementation to allow the national curriculum to be given high priority. His successor, Kenneth Clarke, faced jibes from his critics about delays, so he finally decreed that every teacher should be formally appraised between



1992 and 1994. In the end, however, the Department of Education avoided controversy; there was to be no National appraisal form or checklist, and schools and local education authorities would work out their own procedures.

Chapter 4 looks at the history of staff development and appraisal in Scottish education and the realisation and appreciation of the contribution of in-service training in the effectiveness of schools. It records the work of the National Committee for the In-service Training of Teachers in developing a national system for the professional development of teachers in Scotland. It looks at the National Guidelines on Staff Development and Appraisal issued to all education authorities and records the developmental response of one authority, Lothian Region, to those guidelines.

Chapter 5 looks at the adoption and implementation of the Scottish Office Education Department's appraisal training programme in Lothian Region. The proposed time scale for the planning and phasing of training tutors, appraisers and appraisees is compared to the actual progress, and, as training was seen as vital to the success of the appraisal system, the complete appraisee training programme is included and discussed.

The chapter concludes with discussion on the appraisal cycle and leads into a survey carried out on some of the appraised teachers in Lothian Region. The research for this chapter relies heavily on *Management Training for Head teachers*, a unit of the SOED's *Management of Staff Development and Appraisal Module*, and Lothian Region's *Staff Development and Appraisal* workshop units.

Chapter 6 details the methodology involved in a questionnaire survey of appraised teachers. It explains the format, structure, size and content of the questionnaire and the procedure for issue. All letters of communication, and the questionnaire itself, are to be found in the appendices.

Chapter 7 is a presentation of the results of the survey, including much

qualitative, as well as quantitative, data. This inclusion of many comments and observations made by appraised teachers in Lothian Region is an extremely important and significant contribution to the research.

Chapter 8 is a discussion of the findings of the survey, concentrating on the most important points and relating them to the review of the literature that was presented in earlier chapters. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the educational implications of the survey and the literature review.

### *How does appraisal work outside education?*

The definitions of appraisal tend to reflect the different purposes it is intended to serve and probably the most commonly-quoted definition of teacher appraisal is that formulated by the Appraisal/Training Working Group of the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) Independent Panel on the Teachers' Dispute in 1986:

a continuous and systematic process intended to help individual teachers with their professional development and career planning, and to help ensure that the in-service training and deployment of teachers matches the complementary needs of individual teachers and the schools.

(ACAS, 1986 p 2)

Outside the world of education, however, definitions of appraisal tend to be more utilitarian, with the emphasis, in the first instance, on the benefit to the organisation. Thus,

the fundamental aim of appraisal is to assist in arriving at a situation where the most suitable people are in the right place at the right time.

(National Westminster Bank plc, 1985)

developing your staff to meet objectives is crucial to the success and profitability of the business.

(Marks and Spencer plc, 1987)

Some institutions acknowledge the dual purpose of appraisal.

The overall purpose of the appraisal system is to provide individuals, their line managers, senior management and personnel and training staff with information to be used in doing a better job for the service and for personal satisfaction.

(Civil Service, 1985)

The next chapter examines appraisal outside education in more detail.

## Chapter 2

### Appraisal Systems in Industry

#### *Introduction*

By 1986, 82% of employers operated performance appraisal schemes but at least half the organisations in public administration did not formally appraise employees, although the situation was changing (Long, 1986). Recently, however, there has been a major expansion in the use of appraisal schemes in both the private and public sectors and there is strong evidence that performance appraisal techniques are of increasing interest to employers (IRS 556, 1994).

One of the frequent causes of failure or dissatisfaction with a performance appraisal scheme is the fact that it seeks to fulfil many different and/or conflicting requirements at once. The most common difficulty arises from the impossibility of marrying up a system which is primarily aimed at providing information for salary review with a system which is intended to improve current performance. The problem is an obvious one: an appraisee will try to deny a failing or insist it is of no consequence if this failing is likely to have a direct effect on salary (Hogg, 1988).

#### *Performance related pay*

The late 1980s saw a substantial growth in pay systems linked to individual performance. At this time, organisations, in the service sector in particular, were finding it difficult to recruit and retain staff in a competitive labour market. In some sectors such as finance, there was a move by many employers to dismantle their older, rather bureaucratic pay systems, which were believed to be too inflexible to meet the needs of a competitive market (IRS 560, 1994).

Employers identified the benefits of performance pay as:

improving performance;  
increasing flexibility to deal with recruitment and retention difficulties;  
providing tangible recognition for employees' efforts; and  
reinforcing corporate objectives

(IRS 479, 1992).

Businesses which have approached the need for culture change by introducing performance related pay (PRP) have not always obtained the desired result. PRP schemes that are introduced too rapidly, or with fuzzy performance criteria, can have disastrous results, both divisive and expensive. There are signs of increasing employee dissatisfaction and companies facing serious disruption and closure due to industrial action by unions over PRP (Cochrane, 1995). The cost and effectiveness of individual PRP, therefore, is increasingly being questioned and **performance management** is springing into prominence as a better way to increase efficiency (Trevor, 1993). This is based on the idea that superior organisational performance will only be achieved by optimising employee performance through training and development (Lockett, 1992).

There is a lack of real evidence that PRP directly produces enhanced employee performance, and a suspicion that short-term results may be given priority over long-term development (IRS 560, 1994 *ibid*). Underpinning PRP with a robust appraisal scheme, however, which provides a solid basis for judgments about performance, should help to engender a sense of achievement among employees. In addition a good scheme will help to recruit and retain the kind of people that a company needs (Stein, 1991). It must be noted, however, that the Institute of Personnel and Development (IPD), along with many reputable consultants, advise strongly against a direct relationship between pay and performance appraisal (Hogg, 1988 *ibid*).

### *Effective appraisal*

Large numbers of senior managers have been thinking about appraisal in a new way in the 1990s. Huge organisations have been privatised, or otherwise exposed to commercial pressures for the first time and many

successful businesses are discovering that a good appraisal system is the key to getting the most out of all their employees without making them feel exploited and resentful. Also if the main purpose of any appraisal discussion is to identify weak areas and look for ways in which these may be improved, with there being no relation to pay, the employee is much more likely to participate openly and honestly.

The style or emphasis varies considerably but there is a discernible trend for appraisal schemes to become comprehensive, covering both staff development and job performance (Fowler, 1991). Comprehensive appraisal systems deal with immediate job performance first, followed by discussion of long term training or career development issues.

Appraisal is essentially a matter of being systematic about some common sense elements of naturally good management. Staff work best when they know what they have to do, how well they have to do it and how well they are thought to have done it. So they must talk with managers who need to take staff's views into account when setting work goals and deciding on training.

### *Appraisal interview*

There is a need to prepare for appraisal, giving thought to discussion and considering how best to raise issues. "Discussion" or "meeting" are often preferred to the word "interview" as they emphasise the importance of dialogue and the fact that it is a two-way process. It is not an inquisition or exposition by the manager, nor a negative postmortem of past faults, but an emphasis on positive comment and action, whose primary outcome is an agreed schedule of planned, constructive action.

There must be adequate time set aside for the discussion, which should follow a logical sequence with an interchange of views. A quiet situation, free from interruption and unhampered by time pressures of the normal working environment, provides the opportunity for employees to make

comments and suggestions to managers. Both parties are equal partners in a relaxed and informal process. Appraisals tend to take longer than managers originally expect and one and a half hours is not too long to set aside, as the very important last stages of the meeting could be rushed or the whole discussion could be too superficial. Rushed appraisals are worse than useless.

In some schemes employees complete their own comprehensive self-assessment before the appraisal and this forms a basis for discussion. They are advised to bring a note with them, an "aide memoire", of the key points they want to talk about, just as managers need to be clear about their priority issues for discussion. Other helpful documents are a job description, which serves as a checklist to ensure all aspects of the work have been considered and to agree any necessary revisions to the description, and a record of the previous appraisal with its particular targets and action plans which can provide a good starting point.

Many schemes fail because they rely heavily on evaluation forms filled by the manager and too many personnel departments pay considerable attention to compiling appraisal forms. Research evidence suggests, however, that such efforts can hinder rather than help the appraisal process (Anderson, 1987). A simple system which focuses directly on future development objectives can prove more acceptable to all parties and therefore be more likely to contribute to organisational effectiveness. A lack of enduring documentation recording "ratings" and "evaluative comment" makes the system as simple and effective as possible and a more positive experience for the employee.

Such appraisal systems encourage both appraisers and appraisees to note targets agreed and other action points emerging from the appraisal discussion. This remains confidential to the parties concerned, with no formal recording or reporting to central personnel. The only formal requirements are a need to note items of importance, such as targets, action points, training needs and development requirements for individual

employees if agreed by both parties. There is also a more positive response from managers since the simple nature of the scheme frees them from reporting requirements and minimises the administrative and coordinating demands. It prevents the scheme degenerating into an exercise in bureaucracy rather than a process of improving people's performance.

### *The manager as appraiser*

A person's immediate manager is the biggest single influence on one's effectiveness, happiness at work, morale and personal growth, and developing a subordinate is a necessary active managerial role (Wilson, 1990). Done properly, performance appraisal is an intensely valuable management tool in improving the individual and thus the organisation. Unless managers have the necessary skills to operate it, a performance appraisal system will become at best passive and of little value; at worse it can be a minefield, disliked and feared by both managers and employees alike (Wohlers and London, 1989).

The employee, not the manager, is the prime mover in the appraisal scheme with most to gain by self-evaluation: self-criticism is a great deal more acceptable than criticism from elsewhere. The role of manager is that of counsellor, mentor and coach, not critic and judge, but it is the manager's responsibility to create an interview atmosphere conducive to creative discussion. The interview is a crucial part of the system. A badly handled interview can cause conflict and alienation and will affect the credibility of the system as a whole. Conversely a bland interview aimed at avoiding trouble will add nothing to the appraisee's performance.

It is the appraiser's responsibility to ensure that the discussion covers necessary ground and ends on a positive note, and an interview outline should take the following form:

- reminder of purpose of discussion;
- brief exchange when each party itemises key points to discuss;
- setting agenda;
- point-to-point examination of results of aims and actions agreed at last review;



check against each element in job description, considering which have gone well or less well and why;  
discussion and agreement on job performance aims for next review period;  
similar discussion on employee's developmental objectives;  
agreement on action each needs to take and by when to achieve performance developmental objectives;  
brief "any other business" exchange to raise any matters not dealt with;  
check mutual understanding of key points and action plans.

There is more to appraisal than managers giving directions and guidance; they also learn from the process provided they encourage staff to use the opportunity to raise issues of interest and concern. By inviting comments tactfully, managers can learn as much as employees, who tend to be perceptive judges of performance. Wise managers use appraisal to discover things about their own accomplishments.

No appraisal system lasts forever, although some of the early systems were in place for a very long time (McMahon, 1990). As business demands changed in the 1980s, it came to be accepted that a scheme might have to be redesigned after five or six years. Companies which have taken appraisal seriously for years have lately been revising their methods, and businesses in the private sector have been moving away from the heavily top-down, mechanistic type of scheme. The belief is that standard performance appraisals, conducted on an individual basis, do not contribute to the team building efforts that are such an important element in today's participative management style.

### *Team appraisal*

Whether quantitative or narrative, participative or autocratic, formal or casual, individual performance appraisals do not contribute to team building because they have no mechanism to address the effect of the group on the individual or visa versa (Lanza, 1985). As a supplement to, but not a replacement for, individual performance appraisals, the group appraisal process can fill in those difficult to tackle areas of interpersonal dynamics.

Employees do not perceive the appraisal process as the appropriate format for raising difficulties with colleagues, even though these issues are frequently key factors in determining employee success. By employing a partnership approach to performance appraisals, including self-appraisal and ratings from peers, an individual's performance can be appraised accurately throughout the year and help given with participative goal setting. It has been found that a participatory performance appraisal system involving all members of a team has changed radically the way employees value and think about their jobs (Norman and Zawacki, 1991).

The result of supplementing individual appraisals by measuring the dynamics of team interaction is higher morale and better productivity. Team ratings are more objective because they are the composite of several opinions. Group opinions carry more weight than individual ratings and the employee cannot discount the ratings as being just the immediate line manager's opinion. Peer ratings have also been shown to be one of the best predictors of performance in subsequent jobs (Latham and Wexley, 1982).

The group appraisal process is immune from several of the problems inherent in a standard appraisal system. The line manager is taken out of the hot seat, conveying consensus rating to the employee in a non-adversarial position of coach, supporter and ally. From this position the same information that might be taken defensively by the employee in a normal performance review can be accepted much more easily, especially when it is negative information. As a supplement to individual performance appraisals, the group appraisal process can serve as an effective team building and coaching tool. It can also serve as a group conflict resolution technique.

### *Upward appraisal*

Another factor that appears to be causing problems for more traditional appraisal systems is that employee involvement has been a key theme in recent years and it seems an oversight to exclude them from making a

greater contribution to the appraisal process by using predominantly *top-down* approaches to the appraisal of their managers (Ramsay, 1991). Upward appraisal may facilitate employee involvement in key aspects of organisational life, not least in shaping the management style and culture of the organisation. Upward appraisal is "consistent with the leadership of the future" (Nevels, 1989) and, at the very least, upward appraisal provides employees with an opportunity to voice their views on the way in which they are being managed (Bernardin, 1986).

Management attitudes have often been identified as a key barrier to the effective implementation of employee involvement (Sims, 1985) and upward appraisal, therefore, may have a contribution to make in terms of the "empowerment" of lower-level employees. Indeed it could be seen as the acid test of an organisation's commitment to empowering its employees in reality rather than merely rhetorically.

Adoption of upward appraisal techniques is being considered by more and more UK organisations as part of a broader strategy to enhance employee involvement and commitment. It has the potential to benefit employees by bringing their views and problems to the attention of senior management (Redman, 1992). It also yields information about individual managers and the company as a whole, moving from appraisal questionnaire to work-group session, to commitments to action (Hilton 1992).

### *Conclusion*

Most appraisal systems have abandoned personality ratings such as attitude, intelligence, loyalty and initiative, as too vague and ambiguous, not to mention impossible to measure. In the shift away from trait-oriented schemes, many companies turned to results-oriented ones which also proved to have a number of disadvantages: it is difficult to make quantifiable comparisons, and not all aspects of a job can be expressed in terms of objectives.

Systems using some form of ratings are more appropriate where objectives are reward or administrative: systems setting targets and examining results of specific tasks are better where the objectives are motivational or employee development. "How appraisal will mesh in with promotion, training and career development schemes and in some cases the financial reward system too (although the less the connection with this the better) must be considered at the design stage....the linkages can be very extensive..." (Fletcher and Williams, 1985).

The more appraisers and appraisees are involved in the development of the system in which they are the main participants, the more commitment they will have to making it work. Training is vital if the system is to be carried out professionally and to retain credibility. Commitment to the training programme must come from the top and both appraisers and appraisees must be trained (Randell, 1984). Chapter 5 records the appraisal training programme for teachers in Lothian Region in Scotland but the next chapter examines the history and progress of teacher appraisal in England and Wales.

## Chapter 3

### Appraisal in Education

#### *Introduction*

In Britain the appraisal of teachers' professional performance is not, in itself, a new concept. There are early references as far back as Hoole (1659) but, in more recent times, several appraisal schemes were operating in schools even in the 1970s (Clift et al, 1987). The reasons for wishing to evaluate the performance of teachers have varied from personal desires for professional development to a state's desire to pay teachers according to the results of their teaching.

From an external perspective it seemed that schools, Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and teachers were not interested in appraisal. They were complacent about their achievements. They did not want judgments made about their work. They did not appreciate the development possibilities of appraisal "...particularly in the rapidly changing world in which they had to work" (Routledge & Dennison, 1990 p51). Such criticisms may be unfair but they provide some part of the background against which the introduction of teacher appraisal by legislation must be placed.

Overall, therefore, there was little impetus for the introduction of staff appraisal schemes. Few LEAs encouraged schools to move in this direction. Yet in a labour intensive industry, with schools spending up to 80% of resources on professional staff, the potential benefits of appraisal demanded exploitation. This may explain the reason why, in 1980, the National Union of Teachers (NUT) in England and Wales stated that every teacher should have an annual career development interview related to his or her job description (NUT, 1980).

In the USA *performance evaluation*, as it is often termed, is practised widely and seems to be accepted as a matter of course, particularly since the

publication of *A Nation at Risk* (US, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1983) which raised concern for teacher quality. American trends in teacher appraisal developed out of attempts to make a summative, one-off judgment on teacher-effectiveness a basis for initial certification, contract renewal or dismissal (Turner & Clift, 1988). A more recent survey of South Eastern States, however, found increasing signs of "sensitivity to ownership" and to "legal considerations" (French et al, 1990).

In Australia teacher appraisal is accepted almost universally as common practice, although its purposes are somewhat limited. In 1984 the Beazley Committee of Inquiry into Education in Western Australia recommended the need to incorporate professional development into appraisal schemes, although the report emphasised a need to distinguish between the two.

### *The inevitability of appraisal*

By the early 1980s, more and more voices were proclaiming that staff appraisal of some kind was taking place in most organisations and that schools and teachers should be no exception. In 1983, with the publication of the 1983 White Paper *Teaching Quality*, formally advocated assessment of teacher performance in England and Wales was on the political agenda. The intention of the White Paper was to introduce a formal, systematic and compulsory system of teacher appraisal across the whole of England and Wales (DES, 1983).

Employers can manage their teacher force effectively only if they have accurate knowledge of each teacher's performance. The Government believes that for this purpose formal assessment of teacher performance is necessary and should be based on classroom visiting by the teacher's head or head of department, and an appraisal of both pupils' work and of the teacher's contribution to the life of the school. Those responsible for managing the school teacher force have a clear responsibility to establish, in consultation with their teachers, a policy for staff deployment and training based on a systematic assessment of every teacher's performance and related to their policy for the school curriculum.

(Teaching Quality White Paper, 1983 para 92)

The White Paper went on to add, however, that "...incompetent teachers should be removed" (para 92) and had earlier emphasised the relationship between salary scales and "...policies for promoting commitment and high standards of professional performance" (para 90). Consequently, in the months following the publication of the White Paper, the issue of teacher appraisal became linked with the teachers' pay dispute of 1984/85.

During this long period of industrial unrest, the teaching profession was convinced that the Government wanted to see the worst teachers penalised by not receiving pay increments or forced out of their jobs. Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Education, did not seek to deny the possible connection between appraisal and the attestation of incompetence but wanted to redress the imbalance by stressing the positive benefits of appraisal. He expressly disclaimed any intention to link appraisal directly with merit pay or annual increments. He expected regular professional assessment of teachers' performance and tighter contracts in return for extra money but, by July 1985, Sir Keith had severed the link between appraisal and pay (Marland, 1986).

### *Great expectations*

In January 1985, during a speech to the North of England Education Conference, Sir Keith referred to "professional enhancement" which could be brought about by appraisal and denied being interested only in the removal of incompetents who could not respond to active help (Morris, 1991). Later that year the Government had published the paper *Quality in Schools, Evaluation and Appraisal* which stressed the need for teachers to understand what was to be expected of them in the classroom.

By November 1985, in a speech made to the Better Schools Conference in Birmingham, the Secretary of State was proclaiming that "...a sensitively worked out (appraisal) scheme, carefully introduced, and embodying adequate safeguards for the individual, would, I am confident, help all teachers realise their full professional potential by providing them with better

job satisfaction, more appropriate in-service training and better planned career development..." (DES, 1986).

In 1986 Sir Keith took the opportunity, in what became known as the Education (No 2) Act, to regulate for power to make regulations on appraisal for school teachers and college lecturers, though he saw this as a reserve power. In the same year a much more positive contribution was made by the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) in its constructive intervention in the 1986 teachers' disputes. Its report on appraisal and training (ACAS, 1986) laid down basic principles which could guide a pilot project for which some department of Education and Science (DES) funding was available.

Early in 1986, therefore, LEAs were invited by the DES to compete for Education Support Grants (ESG) to enable them to pilot different approaches in order to formulate a national scheme. The six successful bids were those by Croydon, Cumbria, Newcastle, Salford, Somerset and Suffolk, representing between them urban and rural, and metropolitan and shire county communities.

The pilot scheme was set up in January 1987 under the guidance of a National Steering Group (NSG) and the intention of the six LEAs was clear - to study how appraisal might be implemented in all of their schools, and to establish training strategies to ensure that successful systems were introduced. Unfortunately, the timing coincided with the culmination of the teachers' dispute in an imposed settlement.

As a gesture of the disapproval of the Teachers' Pay and Conditions Act and the removal of negotiating rights with the demise of Burnham, the two largest teachers' unions, the National Union of Teachers (NUT) and the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT), walked out of the Steering Group. This was complemented with various degrees of non-cooperation in piloted areas.



### *The pilot scheme*

The six pilot schemes, influenced by the Steering Group, operated on fairly similar principles. The appraisal cycle followed, briefly, the ACAS model which emphasised that appraisal is a "continuous and systematic process" (ACAS, 1986 *ibid*). The appraisal cycle consisted of an initial meeting between appraiser and appraisee at which certain ground rules were agreed. For example, the procedure and forms of the classroom observations were negotiated; the sources of information were agreed; the agenda, venue, time for the appraisal interview were set. This initial meeting was followed by a period of information gathering, which included classroom observations, and appraisee self-review in preparation for appraisal interview.

Self-review was considered of fundamental importance and preparation for it was included in the training. Usually appraisees were asked to consider their job description, if they possessed one, and whether it needed amending; aspects of the job they considered they had done well; any constraints they had encountered; and what further support, training and opportunities they needed.

The appraisal interview represented the culmination of self-appraisal, information-gathering and classroom observations. The interview took the form of a dialogue between trusting colleagues with "no surprises". About three hours was usually set aside for the discussion which took place in private, comfortable surroundings with minimal risk of interruptions.

During, or shortly after, the interview, an appraisal statement was agreed, targets set and an action plan negotiated, including, where advisable, additional support or in-service training. The appraisal statement was signed by the appraiser and the appraisee and was maintained, in confidence, by the head teacher.

## *Reactions to recommendations*

The final report from the NSG was delivered in July 1989 and an official response was announced by the Secretary of State at the annual conference of the Secondary Heads Association on 2 October. Ministers were uncertain how to act when presented with *School Teacher Appraisal: A National Framework*, or the "Green Book", as it was known, and their hesitancy may be attributed to three reasons:

it presented an overtly supportive model of appraisal, having insufficiently demonstrated links with quality, teachers' promotion and so on;

costing, which envisaged a scheme of over £40 million annually to do appraisal as the NSG recommended;

appraisal was then the scheme of the last Secretary of State but two. The world had moved on rapidly since January 1987.

(Morris, 1991 *ibid*)

In his speech the new Secretary of State for Education, Mr John MacGregor, stated:

I emphasise again...that appraisal is of great relevance and potential in improving standards. The question is how to introduce it nation wide in the most practical and sensible way.

(MacGregor, 1989)

He then declined to accept the recommendations made in the report from the NSG and, instead, initiated a further period of consultation until Easter 1990. Mr MacGregor's reasons for doing so may have been a well-intentioned desire to avoid overburdening the already severely taxed schools and teaching force, but it may be that the developmental model was at variance with Government ideology (Mortimore & Mortimore, 1991).

A postponement effectively avoided ideological conflict and the possible embarrassment of the rejection of a scheme which had been recognised as effective but which the Government was unable to endorse. Also such a scheme had proved more expensive than the Government had prepared to

allow (Powney, 1991).

After this second consultative period, tentative steps towards a system of appraisal were taken when Mr MacGregor issued a statement on teacher appraisal (DES, 1990a) accompanied by supplementary guidance. Appraisal was not to be compulsory. Instead the decision on whether or not to introduce it was to be left to teachers' employers. The seven aims of appraisal schemes noted in the Ministerial statement focused on individuals' professional development, career progress, schools' management, in-service needs and providing information for references. No mention was made of pupil learning or progress.

By the late Autumn of 1990, John MacGregor was replaced as Secretary of State by Kenneth Clarke who soon decreed that teacher appraisal, in fact, would be compulsory as it was "...a duty on employers and an entitlement for teachers" (DES 1990b). It was stated:

Regular appraisal will help to develop the professionalism of teachers and so improve the education of their pupils...Teachers...will soon become accustomed to having their work appraised by senior staff in a way that many of the people in other occupations find quite familiar.  
(DES, 1990b *ibid*)

Mr Clarke was somewhat scathing about the elaboration of the NSGs approach and he derided the necessity of training appraisees (Clarke, 1991). He also took a stern view of the expense, discounting most of the NSG's calculations of training and operating costs (DES, 1990c). Although allowance was made for such costs, the big expenditure would be on cover for teachers involved in training, preparation and administration, in addition to the logically unavoidable absence of the appraiser from his or her own classroom while observing an appraisee at work in the classroom.

In his 1985 Birmingham Speech, Sir Keith Joseph had acknowledged the importance of both training and time for appraisal to be carried out properly. Five years later, ministers were arguing that members of senior management teams were already engaged in informal appraisal and so the

time could be transferred to the formal scheme; training days were available to schools already; the timetable of introduction would obviate the need to take teachers away from the classroom for anything other than appraising their colleagues at work. Thus the Government saw no cause for greater expenditure and, although the pilot LEAs had invested significantly in training, the reduced allocation implied by the 1991-92 specific grant would not in itself fund a comparable investment.

This "appraisal on the cheap" (The Times, 11 December 1990) ensured that teacher appraisal continued to be associated with controversy and poor industrial relations. Nevertheless, the intention was that appraisal for all teachers in England and Wales would be fully enforced by August 1995, operating on a two year cycle.

Over this period of time, education in Scotland had not been idle or ignorant of the many changes and Government demands on the teaching profession south of the border. The Scottish Education Minister had been "casting an appraising eye" for some time over the Scottish teaching profession (The Scotsman, February 24, 1989) and it was the intention of the Minister, Michael Forsyth, to phase in appraisal from 1991. The next chapter examines the development of appraisal in Scotland and, in particular, the close relationship between appraisal and staff development.

### Staff Development and Appraisal

#### **Staff development in Scottish Education**

##### *National system*

From the mid 1970s onwards there was increasing interest in the effectiveness of schools, the fundamental aim of which was to ensure the best possible education for their young people (Wragg, 1987). There was a growing appreciation that the most valuable resource in achieving both this aim and the specific objectives of a school was the teaching staff, working individually or in teams. There was also a realisation and appreciation of the contribution to that effectiveness which in-service training could make. There was, however, concern that course-based in-service by itself was insufficient, since it did not always take into account a school's own identified needs and requirements.

Against this background of general concern about in-service and the rapid changes facing schools and education authorities, the National Committee for the In-Service Training of Teachers (NCITT) established a working group in June 1982. Its remit was to consider and develop a national system for the professional development of teachers in Scotland. The definition of staff development formulated by the NCITT in its report was broadly accepted throughout Scotland:

Staff development is the planned process whereby the effectiveness of staff, collectively and individually, is enhanced in response to new knowledge, new ideas and changing circumstances in order to improve, directly or indirectly, the quality of pupils' education.

(NCITT, 1984)

The report identified a number of principles that were considered to characterise effective staff development in schools. Some of these were concerned with establishing effective management arrangements:

Staff development activities must be planned and coordinated at all levels of management.

The report attached great importance to the process of consultation with all staff in the introduction of management arrangements:

For staff development to be effective it must be based on a collaborative model; and teachers should participate at all stages of the planning and mounting of staff development activities.

The report identified a need for a wider definition of staff development. This was not to be equated solely with in-service courses:

There has been a growing realisation that "off-the-job" training is not in itself sufficient as a means of bringing about change in schools.

Consequently the moves by schools to develop their own in-school in-service programmes were seen as particularly important. These programmes could embrace a wide range of activities such as membership of school working parties, in-school courses, visits to other classrooms and school-based curriculum development work. The NCITT principles were subsequently agreed by the Secretary of State in 1986.

### *National pilot studies*

In 1987, following two national seminars, the Scottish Office Education Department (SOED) and the Association of Directors of Education (ADES) agreed on arrangements for pilot studies to staff development, including appraisal. These arrangements were largely based on the proposals made in the 1984 NCITT report.

The evidence of successful practice from these national pilot studies confirmed the basic principles of the NCITT model. There was a clear move towards more systematic and structured management arrangements within the pilot schools as they progressed. The creation of a favourable climate was considered of particular importance. A sense of "ownership" by staff of the changes proposed was seen as desirable, and this was achieved by

increasing the involvement of staff in the decision-making. It was also found that the full range of staff development activities had to be utilised and programmed by management (MacLeod, 1986).

### *Complementary and interrelated*

The realisation that staff development and appraisal had to be seen as complementary and interrelated processes was appreciated by some in education long before the establishment of the NCITT working group and the pilot studies. In a paper presented to Jordanhill College of Education on 13 September 1980, as part of the Conference Series *Staff Development in the 1980s*, Professors Roy Wilkie and Lewis Gunn of the department of Administration, Strathclyde University, suggested some of the motives for introducing staff appraisal.

The paper outlined the “linkages” between staff appraisal and corporate planning, organisational structure, staffing, payment systems and control and accountability. It hinted at the different, even conflicting, motives on the part of different groups within an organisation but it stressed the connections between staff appraisal, staff development, job satisfaction and motivation. It emphasised the importance and the benefit of training, counselling, opportunities for development and personal growth and recognition of performance.

The paper also discussed the many problems associated with staff appraisal but concluded with the positive observation that, “...if approached in a sensible fashion, it may become an accepted and valued practice” (Wilkie & Gunn, 1980).

The introduction of the term “appraisal” in schools and education authorities in Scotland postdated the 1984 NCITT report. The collaborative model developed in that report, however, clearly recognised the importance of needs analysis. The lack at that time of widely established appropriate processes and practices led to the recommendation that schools should

experiment with, and evaluate, different approaches, so that needs could be identified in a more systematic way.

### *A wider perspective*

In 1988/89 the SOED commissioned a survey of "good practice" in the field of Staff Development and Appraisal (SD&A) in the public and private sectors throughout the UK. Many of the organisations had staff development and appraisal schemes in operation and, in the majority of these, appraisal was seen as part of a planned and systematic approach to the improvement of individual and collective performance.

Among the most frequently stated objectives of SD&A was the need to ensure that all staff had a clear understanding of the objectives of the organisation and the levels of performance necessary to achieve them, and that they had a commitment to orientate their work to the achievement of these objectives (Campbell, 1990).

In February 1989 the Secretary of State published a consultation paper which stated that appraisal had an important role to play in the process of identifying individual staff development needs:

To be effective and comprehensive, programmes for professional development of staff must start from an accurate identification of the training needs of teachers, and of the education service at school, regional and national levels. This requires assessment or appraisal of performance of individual teachers.

(SOED, 1989)

### *A prelude to professional development*

Many educationalists, including Gordon Kirk, Principal of Moray House College of Education in Edinburgh, saw great advantages for the teaching profession from appraisal, sympathetically introduced. He believed that even the best teachers needed appraisal and he clearly saw it as a prelude to professional development. "Appraisal isn't a threatening thing. It is



something that everyone on the staff has with a view to assisting the process of development” (Kirk, in Macleod, 1989).

Gordon Kirk, however, was alarmed by the signs that responsibility for appraisal was being lodged with employers rather than the profession. He argued that the General Teaching Council (GTC), which already oversaw probationary teachers, was the body to supervise appraisal. He strongly felt that teachers being judged by their professional peers, rather than by their employers, would be a way in which the profession really enhanced itself.

Other academics, most notably Professor Tony Keenan of Herriot-Watt University's Business School, felt there was some danger of local authorities reinventing the wheel as they brought staff appraisal into schools. The experience of industry had shown up some of the pitfalls, particularly the proclivity to appraise the individual by focusing on someone's personality, rather than on how a job was performed. He argued that there was too much of a tendency to communicate criticism instead of concentrating on a person's skills and how these could be developed.

Dr George Gordon, Director of Strathclyde University's Centre for Academic Practice, was concerned with the connection between staff appraisal and the possible dismissal of teachers; and he felt that disciplinary measures should be kept totally distinct from an appraisal system as it would prejudice the whole mechanism.

All such comments and evidence were collected during 1988 and 1989, including the response to the Secretary of State's consultation paper *School Teachers' Professional Development into the 1990s*; reports from education authorities private projects; and the report of the survey of SD&A “good practice” in public and private sector organisations. A joint ADES/SOED seminar was held in November 1989 with the purpose of considering the implications of this evidence. Consideration was also given to the elements which could be contained in any national guidelines on SD&A.

Following national consultations, the Secretary of State published *National Guidelines for Staff Development and Appraisal in Schools* in January 1991. The primary aim was to assist schools and education authorities in the effective management and development of their staff:

Evidence from current practice confirmed that staff development was seen to be vital for ensuring the quality of learning and teaching in schools; it provided a means of continuing the development of teachers as members of a profession operating in a changing educational world.

(SOED, 1991a para 1.3)

### *National guidelines*

The National Guidelines were designed to ensure that all education authorities and their schools would have a planned and systematic approach to staff development and appraisal and that there would be an appropriate degree of consistency across the country. They were a framework for the preparation and implementation of programmes of staff development to meet the professional needs of staff. The effectiveness of such programmes depended upon the accurate identification of individual needs through appraisal and also through other procedures such as self-evaluation and whole-school evaluation.

In order to make it clear that appraisal was serving positive ends, the Guidelines emphasised that the planning for staff appraisal should be designed as an integral part of the wider arrangements for the management and development of staff. Four groups of purposes were identified for any formal system of individual appraisal operating within such an overall context of staff management and development:

*Motivation and communication:* appraisal systems will enable staff to discuss with their line managers the aims and objectives of current school policies and practices. Such discussions should be beneficial to staff motivation as they should aid the understanding of existing policies and practices and provide an opportunity for staff to comment on their implementation, and to influence future developments.

*Review, evaluation and development of professional performance:* appraisal procedures will provide a formal occasion when staff can review and evaluate all aspects of their contributions to the team. During such reviews, managers should give formal recognition to achievements and encourage the further development and dissemination of good practice. Managers should also offer necessary support and, when appropriate, explore with staff how performance in some aspect of their work could be enhanced and what steps might be taken to bring this about.

*Identification of personal staff development needs:* appraisal interviews will provide a formal opportunity for staff, in conjunction with management, to identify their personal development needs and to discuss how these needs may be met.

*Career review:* for all teachers, appraisal will provide a regular and systematic procedure for reviewing their career development and for providing appropriate advice and support. For all staff, appraisal procedures will provide a first indication of their suitability for future promotion and of the need to prepare for such an eventuality. For a few, appraisal will help to identify performance which falls below acceptable standards.

(SOED, 1991a para 2.14)

### *Regional response*

In response to the National Guidelines, and to satisfy the four purposes stated above, the Education Service in Lothian Region, "committed to providing learning opportunities of the highest quality", set about developing a scheme for staff development and appraisal. The Region believed that successful curricular, organisational and management developments require all teachers at every stage of their career to acquire new knowledge, skills and techniques through a process of ongoing professional development.

Teachers, as well as being the principal and best resource in the learning and teaching process, are themselves learners with their own individual needs and aspirations.

(LRC, 1993)

The rationale behind the Region's scheme was that quality improvement of learning and teaching was most likely to occur when everyone involved felt

the process of change was being managed effectively. Staff development and appraisal was set in the context of an individual's professional development plan for building on strengths and improving certain aspects of professional practice, through which the quality of teaching and learning in the establishment would be enhanced.

The Region acknowledged and recognised that the term "appraisal", alien in education, may have aroused feelings of apprehension and, therefore, the arrangements for SD&A were based on the need to have a positive and supportive climate at regional and school level. It was necessary to involve all staff in a shared sense of purpose and direction through good communication systems.

In preparation for implementation, and to ensure that the process was positive, supportive and developmental, a programme of training was to be provided for all appraisees and appraisers before they were involved in the appraisal system, in accordance with paragraph 3.5(ii) of the National Guidelines. The next chapter examines that training provision.

### SOED Appraisee Training

#### **Planning and phasing of appraisal**

Whilst it is acknowledged that teachers currently possess many of the skills and engage in many of the processes which come together to create an appraisal system, it was felt that the successful introduction of a formal scheme would not be achieved without the necessary training. In 1991, therefore, the Government gave a commitment to teachers in Scotland that no-one would be expected to appraise or be appraised until basic training had been provided (SOED 1991b).

This provision would be on a phased basis over one and a half days for everyone taking part in the staff development and appraisal process and this training was acknowledged as vital for the success of the system. For this reason a full account of the training programme for appraisees has been included in this chapter.

In Lothian Region, it was proposed that planning and phasing of training appraisers and appraisees would keep to the following time scale:

1991/92      40 tutors to be trained by the SOED by June 1992. This process would require supply cover for such staff for a three day period as the training was on a residential basis. Most SOED tutors would come from within schools spread on a Neighbourhood basis and several from within the advisory service.

During the period from August to December 1992, 50% of Head Teachers, and also related members of the Directorate, would be training as appraisers and/or appraisees. This would involve five half day sessions over this period.

1992/93      A further 80 tutors would be trained by the SOED over the session. Also during 1992/93, SOED trained tutors would train other school staff as tutors, on a Neighbourhood basis, to bring the total number of school level tutors up to a ratio of 1:20, tutors:staff, on a Neighbourhood basis. This would enable the Department to train all staff in schools on the recommended basis of 1:10 in two phases during 1993/94 and 1994/95. During the calendar year 1993, all remaining Head Teachers would be trained as appraisers and appraisees.

1993/94      The first half of all staff in schools would be trained for SD&A as appraisers and/or appraisees, as appropriate. Training for the three half days would be on a joint appraisee/appraiser basis.

1994/95      The process noted above would be repeated for all remaining staff in schools.

(LRC 1991a)

The Education Department was to investigate the implications of enabling all staff to undertake both appraiser and appraisee training. It believed that such a collective procedure was a staff development exercise in its own right and would assist staff in understanding the overall process. It would also enable them to gain confidence in colleagues whether operating as appraisers or appraisees and benefit from gaining a better understanding of each other's role. Although such an initiative would create additional costs, the Education Authority thought that these would be retrieved through the existence of a pool of ready trained staff to take on the appraisal role, when required.

The Education Department had serious reservations regarding the use of the Planned Activity Time (PAT) of teachers during the school working day to deliver the necessary training. It was felt that the demands of other National and Regional priorities for curriculum and staff development to access PAT time could not be ignored and, in that context, the Department considered that funding should be sought from SOED to enable training to be

undertaken during in-service day closures.

*Actual progress*

On 1st June 1992, the Region appointed a Regional Staff Development and Appraisal Training Coordinator and it was his intention from the outset to create good lines of communication with schools on SD&A training matters. Examination of regular and concise SD&A Training Newsletters issued to Staff Development Coordinators in schools makes it possible to chart the actual progress made in Lothian Region.

The first Tutor Training Course was held in June 1992, attended by a mixture of schools and Directorate staff who participated specifically to give feedback on the materials on offer (Newsletter 1).

The number of tutors to be trained for each school depended on staffing numbers:

staff numbers	tutors trained
6-20	1
21-40	2
41-60	3
61 or more	4

Schools with fewer than six staff could be allocated a tutor from a small reserve pool of tutor training places. Tutors were to operate as teams of two and each team would train approximately twenty staff. Schools with fewer than twenty one staff, therefore, could consult with each other at cluster level to ensure that training could be provided for all staff (LRC 1994). A cluster consists of a secondary school and its associated nursery, primary and special schools.

Newsletter 2 reminded schools that the SOED requirement was that every region would have in operation by August 1996 a scheme of SD&A applicable to all teaching staff. To ensure that all staff would be involved by

that date, a three phasing arrangement had been proposed, designed to ease Lothian teaching staff into the process by allowing schools to opt-in voluntarily when they felt ready to do so.

The vast majority of schools soon returned their preferred phasing position and sufficient numbers were present in all three phases to continue with the plan of implementation. Phase 1 schools were informed of arrangements for Tutor Training which, when completed, was followed by a period of time for preparation before tutors delivered appraisal training to staff within the school.

All twenty two phase 1 schools had completed training by June 1993 and the vast majority of evaluation reports from involved staff indicated a very positive start with the efforts of tutors in the training sessions being greatly appreciated by colleagues. These were used to provide information for tutors in phases 2 and 3 to improve the training process wherever possible (Newsletter 4). The SD&A process began for the first wave of phase 1 teachers in February 1994.

The timetable of events for phase 2 schools now read:

May 1993	Tutors selected.
Sept-Dec 1993	Tutors trained by SOED (3 days).
Dec 1993-early Feb 1994	Tutors prepare for delivery of appraisal training to colleagues.
Feb 1994	Sessions A and B delivered to approximately 50% of staff on in-service day.
May 1994	Sessions C, D and E delivered.
June 1994	SD&A process begins for first cohort.
Feb 1995	Sessions A and B delivered to remaining staff on in-service day.
May 1995	Sessions C, D and E delivered.
June 1995	SD&A process begins for remaining staff.

Each stage of this programme was to be repeated one year later for phase 3 schools. This would ensure that all Lothian teachers would be involved in the staff development and appraisal process by June 1996, in accordance with SOED requirements.



## **Appraisee training**

Appraisee training consisted of five sessions phased over one and a half days of in-service training (LRC 1991b).

### **Session A    Introduction to appraisal and the collection of information**

The purpose of the first session was to provide opportunities for appraisers and appraisees to examine ways in which they might collect and present information about aspects of the work of teachers. The participants undertook three main activities over a period of two and a half hours.

#### **Activity 1    *Views of Staff Development and Appraisal***

This was a card sort in which participants worked in small groups and sorted cards describing principles and procedures of appraisal. Twenty four cards listing views of SD&A were discussed and sorted by consensus into three piles, depending on whether the principles and procedures were accepted, rejected or no agreement was reached. The views on the cards did not necessarily reflect the National Guidelines.

#### **Activity 2    *Individual Job Descriptions***

The training programme accepted that it was difficult to evaluate one's own job, or appraise another's, unless a meaningful job description existed. Such a job description is not the same as generic descriptions which often exist to describe posts such as Assistant Head Teacher, nor like those which often form the basis of a contract of employment, often containing phrases such as "other duties as may be assigned" which could be unhelpful in the context of appraisal.

Participants, therefore, were asked to construct a job description, personalised and informal but as if negotiated with and agreed by a line manager. It had to indicate what was actually done and its core focused on

the concept of key tasks. Such a job description was to be brief rather than exhaustive and would be part of the basis for an appraisal, initially for information collection and ultimately for the interview. An exemplar was issued and, on completion, individuals paired up with a partner to talk through the descriptions, helping to clarify, modify and expand.

### Activity 3      *Identify and Evaluate Success*

Participants reflected on high and low points in the carrying out of their work. A simple graphical exercise to illustrate this was completed, followed by small group discussion to consider how evidence about performance in the various aspects of a job could be collected. A list of methods of collecting information was issued and groups completed a table of advantages and disadvantages relating to each one. Some of the more obvious methods included:

- informal talks with colleagues, pupils and parents;
- interviews and questionnaires on specific issues;
- audio or video recording of teaching;
- observation of teaching by a colleague;
- analysis of pupils' work.

Having discussed the pros and cons of the various methods, groups were asked to consider how an appraiser would collect information and what criteria would be used.

The final activity of session A was an exercise on evaluating classroom practice. A rating scale was issued, allowing individuals to assess their own teaching by completing a questionnaire which described classroom work in terms of a number of characteristics. Circled numbers gave an indication of strengths, weaknesses and problems encountered in the classroom environment.

### Session B      Interviewing skills

The purpose of this session was to provide appraisees and appraisers with

an opportunity to experience and reflect on some basic interview skills. A two and a half hour session involving four activities provided opportunities to discuss and agree the shape of an interview schedule and to practise and experience mini-interviews.

### **Activity 1      *Interview Skills***

Participants identified basic interview skills required by observing and discussing a video of an interview. A list of the skills that have been identified as important for interviewers and interviewees was issued and individuals were asked to rate themselves. Discussion followed, on the skills of listening and questioning, giving and receiving feedback, and summarising and setting targets.

### **Activity 2      *Preparing for Interview***

Participants paired up with job descriptions and prepared to conduct two interviews. A list of interview questions was agreed, remembering the three purposes which form the basic agenda of the meeting, which are:

- 1      review of the professional performance of the teacher based on the draft evaluation by the appraiser;
- 2      discussion of current school policies and practices;
- 3      identification of personal staff development needs.

Using a model based upon a standard interview preparation form, participants decided on the items which would feature in the meeting. The point was emphasised that the appraisee had to know what items would be discussed in the interview and that there should be no surprises. Finally, individuals spent a short time on their own contemplating the items and writing notes to prepare for being interviewed.

### **Activity 3      *Practising the Interview***

Participants, in pairs, conducted an appraisal interview twice, each playing an appraisee role and an appraiser role. The details of the interview

remained confidential to each pair of participants but some time was spent at the end of the interviews to agree on a few notes for a plenary review, when reactions to some general points such as time required or difficulties encountered were shared and constructive criticisms were made.

#### **Activity 4      *Reviewing skills***

Participants reassessed their skills in relation to the interviews they had just conducted, using the same list of interview skills issued in activity 1. Both assessment schedules were compared and discussed.

### **Session C    Outcomes**

The purpose of this session was to provide opportunities for appraisers and appraisees to examine the outcomes of the appraisal interview. This examination included a consideration of the criteria for achievable work targets and the discerning of staff development needs within the school. There was also a review of the training experience. The two and a half hour session commenced with a reminder of the background of sessions A and B and was followed by three activities.

#### **Activity 1      *Work Targets and Staff Development Needs***

Participants worked in plenary discussion and established criteria for work targets and staff development needs for an individual. These were displayed on posters and discussed on completion.

#### **Activity 2      *Meeting Staff Development Needs***

There was a discussion of actions to be taken within the school and positive suggestions and comments were given at a plenary session.

#### **Activity 3      *What have we learned and what have we still to learn?***

Participants in groups discussed what had been learned about appraisal and staff development and what learning still needed to be done. All these points and the action to be taken were displayed on posters and discussed in a full plenary.

#### Session D    *Preparing for the interview*

The purpose of this session was to allow participants to use personal, and therefore realistic, information to practise and develop skills in:

- using and evaluating information from the point of view of the appraiser;
- writing a draft evaluation report;
- constructing a schedule for the appraisal interview.

It was a prerequisite of the session that participants would have prepared a personal portfolio of evidence on the quality of their work and would also have brought with them their job description. The two and a half hour session consisted of three main activities.

##### Activity 1    *Sharing Information*

Participants shared with a colleague the information brought to the session.

##### Activity 2    *Writing a Draft Evaluation Report*

Using the information brought to the session, participants practised writing draft evaluation reports and identified principles of good practice.

##### Activity 3    *Preparing an Interview Schedule*

Participants practised preparing an interview schedule and used the process to identify problems and solutions. All these activities provided opportunities for practising skills and for identifying helpful principles and procedures.

## **Session E    Interviewing and record writing**

This session was designed to reflect the real appraisal process, as far as possible, within the constraints of training, and allowed time to reflect critically on that process. It gave participants the opportunity to practise and evaluate an interview and record writing, having prepared an agenda for the appraisal interview at the end of session D. The two and three quarter hour session consisted of two main activities.

### **Activity 1        *Conducting an Interview***

The participants worked in pairs to carry out the planned interview with each person having the opportunity to be interviewee and interviewer. The participants then evaluated the process individually and then, in plenary, specified the skills used and identified the Do's and Don'ts for the appraiser.

### **Activity 2        *Writing a Record***

On their own, participants wrote an appraiser's record of the interview with reference to the appraisee. The written records were then exchanged in order to produce two mutually agreed records. In plenary, the participants discussed issues relating to the writing of a record and summarised Do's and Don'ts of record writing.

In addition to the above training, Lothian Region appreciated that audio-visual systems could help to capture the attention and motivate staff involved in development courses. An effective system can reinforce a point or simply make large amounts of information more digestible (Cole 1993). From the summer of 1992, therefore, an interactive video package, which focused on training in interview skills, has been available to teachers in the Region.

## **Interactive Initiative**

The SOED, through the Scottish Interactive Technology Centre (SITC),

based in Moray House, Edinburgh, created, over a period of eighteen months, the interactive training package *Skills for Appraisal Interviewing*. In-service providers, computer programmers and practising teachers in Scotland contributed to ways of training staff in development and appraisal techniques. The idea was to provide schools throughout the country with state-of-the-art material that would be a ready-made starting point for their staff appraisal schemes, one which staff could use at their own pace and one which would highlight best, and worst, practice in appraisal technique.

The utility value of the package "is in the one-to-one relationship between user and machine which has been programmed to comment upon that user's responses and techniques in the privacy of a darkened in-service suite" (Mitchell 1994). It consists of a few basic instructions followed by a straightforward appraisal of talents and techniques, with a ready-made bank of commentaries for suggested improvements, for fine-tuning approaches and even for giving praise. Such technology allows the user to repeat scenarios not completely understood, skip material already known and move on to the next piece of training, or even switch off if the user felt he or she was being patronised.

Lothian teachers, therefore, have had the opportunity to use the hundreds of visual examples of a wide range of appraisal interviewing skills to enhance the five training sessions before embarking on the appraisal cycle.

### **Two-year appraisal cycle**

The appraisal of staff is carried out by the line manager who meets with the appraisee, early in the two-year cycle, to set the agenda by agreeing a limited range of main targets, normally three or four maximum, which form the basis for the appraisal. Classroom observation takes place during the first part of the cycle and information relating to the agreed target areas is collected by the appraiser. Towards the end of this period the appraiser and appraisee meet to discuss and collate the information gathered and to draw up a pre-meeting document, which identifies the main aspects to be covered

during the appraisal meeting.

This meeting is held towards the end of the first year and is followed by the production of the appraisal statement by the appraiser. This statement is discussed by both parties during a review session. Outcomes, such as staff development, are identified and new targets set for the next phase. During the second year an interim review meeting is held between the appraiser and the appraisee to discuss progress and make any necessary adjustments to agreed plans, including the mutual agreement of the agenda for the next cycle (LRC 1991c).

The next two chapters are an analysis of a survey of many of the Lothian teachers who are presently completing their first appraisal cycle.



### Methodology

#### **Survey of Appraised Teachers**

This study involved questioning Lothian teachers who had experience of the appraisal interview and I decided to write and distribute a questionnaire to as large a sample of appraised teachers as possible. It was also my intention to interview one or two appraisers but a prolonged period of personal illness towards the end of the school session made this impossible.

Questionnaires are a popular way of gathering information and they have an advantage over interviews in that there is no interviewer coming between the respondent and the response, clarifying the meaning of the question, or indeed the answer. Questionnaires also have the advantage of being an efficient use of time, provide anonymity for the respondent and should consist of standardised and straightforward questions. Traditionally one of the disadvantages of postal questionnaires, however, is that the return rates are low.

#### *Sampling*

Initial contact was made with the primary school Staff Adviser, Mary Toner and the secondary school Staff Development and Appraisal Training Coordinator, Peter McCourt, who provided a list of 40 primary schools and 16 secondary schools belonging to Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Lothian SD&A programme.

It would be very difficult to obtain a truly representative sample containing equal numbers of men and women in the right proportion of people of different ages, income groups, ethnic origins and religious beliefs. It may be argued, however, that, for the purposes of this study, a "microcosm of the

voting population" (Munn and Drewer, 1990) was not necessary. The list of schools, therefore, was reduced to a more practical size of 20 primary and 15 secondary schools, allowing for variations in size, locality and whether denominational or non-denominational.

Each Head Teacher was initially contacted by telephone, sometimes involving several attempts to get past the ever-vigilant and concerned administrative assistants, to gauge their feeling, and that of their staff, about completing a questionnaire. As a result of this initial contact, the list of schools was further reduced to 11 primary and 12 secondary schools. This may be interpreted as only schools positive to the idea of staff appraisal were eventually involved in the survey. The fact that the Head Teacher indicated a willingness on the part of his/her school to take part in the survey did not obligate any member of his/her staff to complete the questionnaire, a truth that was made perfectly clear to me by several of the Head Teachers concerned.

#### *The questionnaire (appendix 1)*

A questionnaire should be brief, attractive to look at and easy to understand. It is important to be clear about what it is you want to find out and what kind of information the questionnaire will provide. A questionnaire should also be reasonably quick to complete, in order to encourage completion and provide the information required.

Conscious of the ever-increasing workload of teachers, therefore, and the negative opinion of many towards the completion of questionnaires, I decided to keep it to as simple a format as possible. The questions were of a yes/no form, which involved ticking the appropriate box, but there were opportunities for comments and an attached letter (appendix 2) made it clear that any observations and perceptions would be appreciated.

The questionnaire consisted of two sides of one A4 sheet of paper and was separated into four parts. The first part consisted of 4 questions on appraisal

training and wished to establish whether or not it had been provided and found useful. This section included a question on the availability and usefulness of the interactive video pack mentioned in the previous chapter. I had decided not to request too much detailed analysis or comparison of the many elements of the appraisal training programme as this would probably result in an extremely poor return.

Part two consisted of 16 questions concerning the appraisal interview, once again involving ticking the appropriate box or, in addition, circling appropriate words. This section investigated the general tone and conditions of the interview and the inter-personal relationships between appraiser and appraisee. It also questioned whether there was any discussion on job targets and training needs, deemed so important in all debate on staff appraisal.

Section three consisted of 5 questions gathering background information on respondents to allow comparison of returns with regard to school, experience and position. The final part, consisting of 9 questions, investigated opinions and possible reservations about post-appraisal elements such as professional development, teaching and classroom practice and the relevance of appraisal to everyday working life. Although the questions, as before, were of the yes/no format, it was hoped that the requests for comments, coming as they did at the end of the questionnaire, would result in much useful information and insights into the positive and negative aspects of appraisal experiences.

### *Procedure*

Before embarking on any research involving Lothian teachers it is not only polite, but also necessary, to inform the directorate of intentions and seek permission. A copy of the questionnaire, therefore, was submitted to the directorate and it was discussed at committee level by Assistant Director Alice Bertram and the Staff Development and Appraisal Working Group. This group was intending to complete a similar exercise involving all

appraised teachers and it was felt that two requests to complete similar questionnaires would result in a very poor return. After much discussion and a realisation that different information was being sought, approval was finally given by Tom McMillan, Assistant Director of Education, Quality Assurance Division (appendix 3). All schools were informed of the request, as is the practice in Lothian Region.

During the initial telephone conversation with Head Teachers an indication of the number of appraised teachers had been given, ranging from 2 secondary schools with 30 appraised staff in each one, to schools with only one appraised member of staff, the Head Teacher himself/herself. A package was prepared for each school involved in the survey and each one contained a personal letter to the Head Teacher (appendix 4) and the necessary number of questionnaires with an explanation letter, already mentioned, and pre-addressed envelope attached to each one. The letter requested the teacher to appreciate the confidentiality and anonymity of the questionnaire and to return it using the education department's internal mailing system to save money.

11 primary and 12 secondary schools were involved in the survey and a total of 160 questionnaires were issued to appraised teachers. 74 colleagues returned a completed questionnaire which is a 46% response. A breakdown of the number of staff who returned a completed questionnaire is shown in table 6.1.

**Table 6.1**

	Primary	Secondary
teacher (t)	24	1
senior teacher (ST)	7	1
assistant principal teacher (APT)	n/a	3
principal teacher (PT)	n/a	7
assistant head teacher (AHT)	2	4
depute head teacher (DHT)	3	3
head teacher (HT)	11	8
total	47	27

The number of Head Teachers who returned a completed questionnaire was an excellent 100% in the primary sector and 67% from the secondary

schools. Of the 47 primary staff, 16, or 34%, belonged to Senior Management Teams (SMT) compared to 15 out of 27, or 56%, from the secondary sector. The lack of returned questionnaires from secondary teachers was particularly disappointing and may indicate disinterest in, or distaste for, teacher appraisal among non-SMT secondary colleagues. 75 of the issued questionnaires had been sent to 12 secondary schools and resulted in a 35% response. The primary response was 55%.

It must be stated here that there is an appreciation of the importance of not attaching too much significance to the quantitative data of a survey which did not have a particularly high response rate. However, there is equally an appreciation of the resultant qualitative data; the many comments and observations made by 74 members of the Lothian teaching profession. Throughout the analysis of the questionnaire in the next chapter, therefore, and also in the final discussion chapter, comments and quotes will be included to enhance and expand upon the basic percentage statistics and conclusions.

### Results of questionnaire

#### Responses to the questionnaire

##### 1 Appraisal training

There was more or less a 100% positive response to the question ***“Did you receive appraisal basic training?”*** which almost confirms the Government's commitment to all Scottish teachers that no one would be expected to be appraised until basic training had been provided. The single respondent who did not receive training, a primary infant teacher with 5 years experience, did not give any reason.

68 teachers, or 92% of respondents, found the appraisal training experience useful, although a few questioned the time factor and the relevance of the training. An infant primary teacher with 13 years experience was of the opinion that the training was totally irrelevant and questioned the ability of class teachers to take on the role of the interviewer. He/she also questioned the cost of so much A4 paper which was often discarded after only a few written comments.

A primary HT with 36 years experience was dissatisfied with the training provided and strongly questioned, as the authorities, in his/her opinion, were not really taking appraisal seriously, how teachers could be expected to regard it as important and worthwhile. He/she also was of the opinion that too much time was involved in training. On the other hand a secondary HT with 22 years experience was dissatisfied with appraisal training because the allocated time was insufficient.

An infant/middle primary teacher with 5 years experience, who had been pleased with the training, did feel, however, that it could have been accommodated in one day as *“a lot of money and time was wasted on overly*

*long training sessions...and free lunches". He/she commented that there had been no benefit as nothing had changed in school after appraisal and "now that thousands of pounds had to be saved from school budgets... most teachers would prefer the money spent on appraisal training and cover to be given to Lothian Region to distribute to schools".*

### *Interactive video pack*

28% of respondents had made use of the SOED interactive video pack ***Skills for Appraisal Training***. 10 out of the 21 positive responses had not found the material useful, 1 primary HT was unsure of its usefulness and another primary HT found it *"...useful up to a point but not really impressed with it"*. A primary DHT with 18 years experience who **had** found it useful commented, however, that *"...in an ever increasing work load for teachers, finding time for appraisal is difficult"*.

12 of the 21 respondents who had experience of the interactive video pack were members of school Senior Management Teams (SMT), ie HTs, DHTs or AHTs. Of the total number of respondents, only 9 out of 43 non-SMT teachers, or 21%, had experience of the SOED interactive video pack compared with 12 out of 31, or 39%, who were SMT members. This may possibly indicate, as John Mitchell suggested in his TESS article (Mitchell 1994 *ibid*), that SMTs *"...haven't offered their staff the time and opportunity to get involved with some of the most effective machinery at their disposal"* and that they are, therefore, *"...failing in their duties"*.

6 of the 9 non-SMT respondents who **had** made use of the interactive training package, however, did not find it useful and an upper primary school ST, who was also an SD&A trainer, found the training material video to be *"insulting to anyone with any intelligence"*.

## **2 The appraisal interview**

### *Preparation and self-evaluation*

5 teachers, all working in the primary sector, did not prepare for the appraisal interview, 1 infant teacher claiming that there was too much time taken up by the appraisal system in an already busy schedule. Another infant teacher had partly prepared, therefore a total of 69 respondents, or 93%, had made some preparation for the meeting.

Only 1 teacher, a primary HT with 36 years experience who **had** prepared, felt that the interview did not involve some degree of self-evaluation, while other HTs felt that this element proved to be very useful. A secondary PT with 22 years experience admitted that the system had *"...made me look at myself as a whole person - not just a teacher"* while a primary infant teacher had found that the experience had brought about a rethink of professional development with a more positive approach to his/her career. Another infant teacher with 9 years experience simply stated that he/she found the self-evaluation exercise valuable.

#### *Period of notice*

Only 3 respondents felt that the period of notice of their appraisal interview was inadequate for their preparation, although 1 infant teacher did not tick either box. A primary HT, who had appreciated particularly the self-evaluation element of appraisal, felt strongly that the system was *"...somewhat superficial and weak"* and that his/her appraiser did not have a sound knowledge of his/her school. Another dissatisfied respondent, a secondary HT, felt that the time pressure was inappropriate and that the complexity of his/her job was not given sufficient recognition because of the tight time scale. A total of 70 appraised teachers, therefore, or 95%, were satisfied with the period of notice given by their appraiser.

Only 1 respondent, a middle primary ST, was dissatisfied with the physical conditions of the interview but did not reveal if the problem concerned comfort, privacy or interruptions to the meeting. Another primary ST was not satisfied with the location.





## *The interview process*

Most of the measures of the interview process yielded positive responses. Only 16% of respondents, or 12 teachers, admitted to having been told something about their job performance that had come as a surprise to them. A secondary PT with 22 years experience acknowledged that the meeting had *"...brought to the surface all my specific duties and how I am only one person"*, and that he/she should not worry so much about completing all tasks on time.

Another secondary PT with 19 years experience had given his/her appraiser an open brief in respect of information gathering. The subsequent interviewing of members of his/her department, auxiliary staff and even senior pupils had resulted in a rather stressful time for the appraisee but an extremely successful and illuminating appraisal for both parties.

### *Tone of interview*

92% of respondents found the general tone of the interview to be relaxed; 78% found it to be friendly; and 67% helpful, indicating a generally supportive approach on the part of the appraisers. Of the 33 members of staff, or 45%, who found the experience interesting, a middle primary teacher commented that it was a good time to talk to an interested other who could both help and see strengths. An infant teacher had a very pleasant experience of appraisal, having his/her morale boosted *"and came out of it feeling good"*.

Another infant teacher commented on the impossibility of the situation *"if personalities clashed"*, while a secondary DHT stressed that the appraisal interview must always be supportive, non-threatening and positive. Indeed, in the survey there were no negative comments regarding the general tone of the interview. Not one respondent found the experience to be embarrassing, uncomfortable, aggressive or intimidating and only 2 teachers, or 3%, admitted to finding the experience a little stressful.

*Length of interview*

Although 96% of appraisees felt the length of their interview had been “*about right*”, there was a variation in interview length, as indicated in table 7.1. 34% of staff said it had lasted between half an hour and one hour whereas 60% experienced interviews lasting between one and two hours. 3 primary STs and 1 upper primary teacher had interviews which lasted over two hours. 1 of the STs commented that he/she had enjoyed the positive feedback and compliments “*...not normal in primary teaching*”.

**Table 7.1**

		<u>Primary</u>		<u>Secondary</u>			
t/ST		AHT/DHT	HT	t/ST/APT/PT	AHT/DHT	HT	
< half hour	0	0	0	0	0	0	
half-1 hour	9	3	2	5	2	4	
1-2 hours	18	2	9	7	5	4	
> 2 hours	4	0	0	0	0	0	

In the primary sector the majority, 70%, experienced longer interviews lasting more than an hour while in the secondary sector the split was more even: 58% compared to 42% who had interviews of one hour or less. 67% of non-SMT staff experienced longer interviews compared with 57% of SMT members and this result should be compared with the findings of an IPM survey which showed 30-60 minutes as the most common length of appraisal interview among non-managerial employees and one to two hours among managerial employees (Long 1986 *ibid*).

*Freedom of expression*

100% of respondents felt that they were given adequate freedom to put forward their views to the appraiser and that no conflict was experienced during their interview time. The chance to air views and to discuss work on a one-to-one basis was seen by many of the respondents as one of the major benefits of the appraisal interview.

Only two respondents felt that job targets had not been agreed at the end of the interview and two others, both primary HTs, felt that they had not been agreed on a joint basis, one of them preferring more challenging targets. A secondary HT felt that, although targets had been agreed jointly with the appraiser, they were mainly by himself/herself and would have appreciated more constructive criticism.

12% of respondents, consisting of 5 primary and 4 secondary teachers, did not feel that training needs had been identified at the end of the interview but, of the 65 positive replies to this question, 100% felt that training needs had been agreed between appraiser and appraisee.

### **3 Post-appraisal**

#### *Professional development*

48 respondents, or 65%, thought that appraisal had brought about professional development. A primary teacher stated that the interview had resulted in a *“rethink of professional development with a more positive approach to my career”*. A primary HT found appraisal a positive experience, offering *“a window to discuss professional concerns and personal development”* but added that the system was perhaps too user-friendly and would require more rigour *“if it is genuinely to address development (and) professional needs”*.

4 respondents admitted that they were unsure, or it was too early to say, whether appraisal would result in professional development and the remaining 22 teachers, or 30%, answered “no” to the question. A primary AHT with 23 years experience admitted that teachers do need time to reflect, look forward and progress but appraisal did not seem to be the way. *“There has to be a better way of helping teachers develop (and) I do not feel this form of appraisal does that in any way”*. A secondary HT strongly felt that the

money spent on the appraisal process *“would have been better spent on in-school evaluation and development”*. A secondary PT was even stronger in his/her condemnation when commenting that *“time, money and effort required should be used to better advantage ie smaller classes or even useful SD (staff development)”*.

An infant primary teacher with 15 years experience admitted that, although appraisal did not bring about any **specific** professional development, *“...I found it a positive and encouraging experience, therefore this is reflected in personal attitude, in terms of self-confidence and job satisfaction and, consequently, in performance and motivation”*.

It is recognised that staff development embraces a wide variety of activities ranging from formal courses to informal events such as visits to other classes and schools and membership of school working parties. As one secondary HT succinctly put it, *“I would have undertaken development with or without appraisal”*. Table 7.2 shows the breakdown of the response to the question ***“Has appraisal brought about professional development?”***.

**Table 7.2**

		yes	no	don't know
primary	teacher	15	8	1
	ST	5	2	-
	AHT	1	1	-
	DHT	2	1	-
	HT	7	3	1
secondary	teacher	1	-	-
	ST	1	-	-
	APT	2	1	-
	PT	4	2	1
	AHT	3	-	1
	DHT	1	2	-
	HT	6	2	-
	total	48	22	4

*Teaching performance and classroom practice*

Only 11 respondents, or 15% of teachers, acknowledged that appraisal had

improved their teaching performance and the majority of them, 9 out of 11, worked in the primary sector. 14 teachers either did not know or felt that the question was not relevant to their position. The remaining 49 respondents, or 66%, felt that there had been no improvement in teaching performance after appraisal. These figures are not too surprising as there exists in the teaching profession, and in most other professions for that matter, a natural reluctance to admit that improvement in one's methods is necessary or, indeed, desirable.

In response to the question **"Has appraisal changed your classroom practice?"** only 3 primary teachers, with 3, 7 and 13 years experience respectively, and 2 secondary teachers, an APT and an AHT, answered "yes". It may be argued that classroom practice is changing constantly, particularly as less experienced teachers adapt to circumstances and personalities. One middle primary school teacher with 16 years experience, who had noticed an improvement in teaching performance, commented that, although appraisal had not brought about changes in classroom practice *"...courses attended during the year did"*.

### *Relevance and retention*

Despite the responses to the last two questions, the overwhelming majority of respondents, 56 or 76%, thought that appraisal has relevance to their everyday working lives and an even larger number of appraised Lothian teachers, 60 or 81%, are of the opinion that the appraisal system should be retained. Of the 60 respondents to this question, 27 (45%) were content to retain the appraisal system in its present form, 6 (10%) were unsure but 27 (45%) teachers would appreciate some modification.

A primary HT admitted that his/her school had agreed to pilot its own form of appraisal next session, having taken part in the Lothian Region system for 2 years. A secondary DHT commented that the system was too complicated and admitted to operating *"an amended system to suit ourselves!!"*, streamlining the time factor particularly. Many other respondents

commented on the time pressure, claiming that the present system was too time consuming, particularly if it has to be repeated every two years, as an upper primary teacher noted. He/she added that *"...it was beneficial to have gone through it all once though (but) for future appraisals it could be condensed and this would not detract from its value to all concerned"*.

A primary HT was concerned about the huge amount of time involved for the SMT while a secondary Head Teacher's concern was *"the disruption to teaching caused by appraisal interviews during teaching (and) learning time"*. A secondary AHT expressed reservations about *"the Region's commitment to providing appropriate cover so that appraisal can take place"*. He/she was also concerned about the inability of the Region to meet all identified need and SD courses.

Many Head Teachers had strong reservations about the present system, although only one, a primary school HT, was of the opinion that the appraisal system should not be retained. A secondary HT thought that the appraisal meeting was of more use to the appraiser *"in that more was learned about the school and about me by that person"*. Another secondary HT felt that there was too much focus on the Head Teacher's influence on the performance of the school and *"not enough analysis of my personal effectiveness in terms of individual management skills"*. Yet another secondary HT felt that the complexity of the job was not given sufficient recognition by the appraiser and a primary HT found the whole experience *"rather too cosy"* with Head Teachers choosing their "Assisting Head" to gather the evidence for appraisal and possibly allowing *"scope for the 'old pal's act' to take place"*.

Another primary HT felt that the system was too confidential to be a "true" appraisal and a primary DHT colleague went even further in his/her condemnation by stating that the present system was too confidential in that it could only be used at a teacher's discretion and that it lacked any positive relevance to a teacher's career. He/she added that the system lacked incentives such as bonus payments and, therefore, did *"not see it as a*

*valuable part of the educational career structure (but) more of an added-on lip service to appraisal”.*

Several respondents, particularly primary staff, mentioned the problem of providing class cover to allow teachers adequate time to prepare for, as well as participate in, appraisal interviews. One primary HT stated that it was very difficult in primary schools to find the necessary cover, *“even from the Authority”*, and a primary AHT colleague predicted that, once all schools were using appraisal, there would never be enough cover *“...for all the needs in all the schools”*. Another primary HT found that appraisal cover was fine for class teachers but felt that a supply teacher could not cover to enable members of school SMTs to write up appraisal review statements. He/she appealed for the removal of absence cover for primary SMTs to enable them to manage *“in a planned way”*.

### *Benefits and Boosters?*

57 out of 74, or 77% of the Lothian teachers who responded to this questionnaire, felt that appraisal had been of benefit to them. Many respondents mentioned the *“confidence boosting”* and positive feedback experienced during the interview and some appreciated the benefit of spending uninterrupted time with line managers discussing personal achievements and future aspirations. One primary ST enjoyed the opportunity to *“discuss the schools direction and reaffirm that we were on the same wavelength”*. A primary HT found the experience very positive and was convinced that appraisal had led him/her to make a career move.

One or two respondents particularly mentioned their appraiser and the importance of the role. An infant teacher with 26 years experience wrote that *“I can imagine that all appraisers are not so sympathetic and understanding as my appraiser was!”*, but added that appraisal must not be allowed to become an ego trip for the appraiser. Another infant teacher felt that he/she could now *“approach my appraiser about anything”* and an upper primary teacher commented that *“everybody should feel positive about appraisal”*.

17 colleagues, or 23% of the respondents, did not agree.

An infant teacher felt that there was a need for *“some kind of system where incompetent teachers should have their weaknesses pointed out”* but was not sure of the solution to the problem. Another primary teacher with 17 years experience felt that appraisal was a *“complete waste of time and money”* and that everything spent on training and appraisal *“could be put to better use - **more teachers**”*. A primary ST did not think appraisal would make much difference but he/she added that *“it is nice to get time to talk about your career even if nothing happens as a result”*. A primary DHT was equally cynical with the observation that, having been both an appraisee and an appraiser, he/she found the main benefit *“was the fact that the teacher had an hour set aside to discuss their problems and aspirations without feeling guilty about leaving their class”*.

The majority of respondents, however, remained optimistic about appraisal and considered it a welcome development, provided, as one primary HT observed, it was *“handled sensitively, in the correct climate with the intention of taking a positive line”*. An upper primary teacher summed up the feelings of many teachers who have experienced appraisal when he/she commented *“I had reservations about appraisal before I actually went through it. These were very soon dispelled when it actually started”*.

An infant teacher with 15 years experience claimed that time and cost would inevitably create reservations about appraisal in its present form and the comment made at the end of the questionnaire by a secondary HT with 25 years experience expressed the concern of many teachers who are otherwise convinced of the benefits of teacher appraisal:

I think that appraisal will fail unless it is properly funded. I feel the recent decision to reduce the time devoted will, in fact, reduce the impact and effectiveness of the system.



## Summary

Almost all respondents received appraisal basic training and nine tenths of them found it useful.

Less than three out of ten teachers had made use of the SOED interactive video pack *Skills for Appraisal Interviewing* and the majority of them were members of Senior Management Teams.

More than nine out of ten teachers had prepared for the appraisal interview, and almost all interviews involved self-evaluation.

Ninety five percent of teachers were satisfied with the period of notice given by their appraiser.

Fifteen percent were told something during the interview that was a surprise to them.

Nine tenths of teachers found the interview relaxing, three quarters friendly and two thirds helpful.

More than four out of ten teachers found the interview interesting and less than three percent found it stressful.

Ninety six percent found the length of the appraisal interview about right and three out of five interviews lasted between one and two hours.

All appraisees felt that they were given adequate freedom to put forward their views during the interview.

Ninety seven percent felt that job targets had been agreed.

Almost nine out of ten appraisees felt that training needs had been identified and agreed by the end of their interview.

More than six out of ten thought that appraisal had brought about professional development.

Only fifteen percent of teachers thought that appraisal had improved their teaching performance.

Only seven percent of appraisees felt that appraisal had changed their classroom practice.

Three quarters of the teachers felt that appraisal had relevance to everyday working life.

Four out of five of the appraised teachers who returned a questionnaire want the appraisal system to be retained but almost half of them want some modification.

More than three quarters of appraisees felt that appraisal had been of some benefit to them.

### *Finally*

All research is fallible and, at best, the replies to this questionnaire provide a glimpse of the way staff appraisal has been implemented and accepted in a few Lothian schools. The knowledge revealed by this study is inevitably incomplete but, hopefully, the many comments and observations made by teachers working at all levels of primary and secondary education may contribute to and enhance the quality of the local education service.

### Discussion of the findings

#### *Training*

Training is an essential part of introducing appraisal and my findings do indicate that it is being received by Lothian Region teachers. A breakdown of the five sessions of the training programme provided in Lothian Region is found in chapter 5 and the many activities covered all aspects of SD&A, from the collection of information and views of staff development and appraisal to writing evaluation reports and appraiser's records.

Appraisal training should be all about self-examination, self-analysis, self-exploration and intercommunication (Humphreys, 1992). To this end, the trainers and course organisers did not give "appraisal on a plate" but successfully made the course content interactive and experiential, ensuring that the opinions of trainees were aired, self-esteem heightened, professional experiences shared and discussed and emotions involved. Although nine out of ten respondents in the survey found their appraisal training useful, there were, however, many negative comments regarding time and materials.

#### *The interview*

The appraisal interview is at the hub of the appraisal process and preparation is essential to ensure that an interview gets off on the right footing. Proper attention seems to have been paid to the physical environment of the interview, as well as to the personal environment; the prepared agenda and the awareness of issues.

There could have been more emphasis on interview and counselling skills, as well as awareness raising and self-review techniques, during session B of the training programme. There is much value to be had in justifying

beliefs and methods while practising interviewing, being interviewed and observing. Appraisal interviews have a recognisable structure and training did involve activities for identifying and labelling interview stages, processing steps and ranking them into sequential order.

Successful interviewing technique requires mastery of many skills including listening, questioning, discussing issues involved, solving differences of opinion and negotiating targets. By demonstrating them well and badly, training could have provided opportunities for identifying and discussing such skills.

Teachers, like other groups in society, are a cross-section of personality types who react to situations in a variety of ways and for different reasons: reticent, aggressive, nearing retirement or at an early stage of a career. It is important that appraisers and appraisees, therefore, can identify facets of body language and tone of voice that indicate aspects of feelings. An element of training could have provided subjective comments as an aid to identification of expressive behaviour.

The SOED interactive video pack *Skills for Appraisal interviewing* provides the opportunity for all of the above to be experienced, either individually or in groups, by covering every stage of an appraisal interview with appropriate methods of dealing with the stages. A full range of skills are demonstrated in full length interviews with opportunities to make choices and decisions about how to use them and how to proceed with the interviews.

The pack compares favourably with similar ones used in industry, such as the British Telecom (BT) interactive video *Appraisal and Counselling Distance Learning*. The BT one, however, has a greater appreciation of the close relationship between appraisal and counselling skills. The SOED pack does not seem to be popular with, or readily available to, teaching staff in Lothian as less than thirty percent of respondents had made use of it. In my opinion, the use of the interactive video pack would enhance the 'interviewing skills' element of the training programme.

## *Classroom observation*

Although appraisal training included an exercise on evaluating classroom practice, allowing individuals to assess their own teaching, it could have included more discussion on the feelings about being observed in the classroom. Classroom observation is a sensitive issue for teachers but it has been accorded a prime place in the school teacher appraisal project in the UK. The measurement of teaching methodology, class management, pedagogy and interpersonal skills must be structured in such a way as to promote self reflection (Lawton, 1987).

The areas chosen for observation should be negotiable and the process must be seen to be supportive and non-threatening. It is also important to agree what the appraiser should do when present in the teaching area. This may range from a formal, non-participant observation session to a whole-hearted involvement of the appraiser in the teaching. With much more co-operative teaching taking place in the classroom today, and a more positive and constructive attitude to working as a team and sharing others strengths and weaknesses, the observation arrangements may approach the latter to a greater or lesser degree.

Despite the collaborative and caring climate of most schools, however, and the appraisal training for all participants, there would probably still be a certain degree of nervousness amongst appraisees before any observation sessions. The information gathered from such sessions, and the other preparation activities involved in the appraisal interview, can serve as opportunities for development in themselves. Within the appraisal process, however, they can only be considered truly successful if they enable a productive appraisal interview to occur.

The key question for appraisal is whether it aids the learning and teaching taking place in the school. Only fifteen percent of respondents thought that appraisal had improved their teaching performance and slightly more than one in twenty of them felt that appraisal had changed their classroom

practice. Does this indicate no need for change or are appraisers being completely honest about their observations?

### *Pupil power*

During classroom observations some valued forms of teacher behaviour may simply not occur but, equally, observers must understand that their presence is likely to affect the teaching process. The gallery lesson, which was developed in Scotland by David Straw in the 1830s, had student teachers and tutors watching a lesson; but this was stopped in the end because of people literally "playing to the gallery" (Powney 1991 *ibid* p81). When superiors are present people inevitably behave in a different way - they may show off, they may clam up, or they may be larger than life; but they will not be the same as they are in the absence of a high status person.

Schools are set up with senior management teams and principal teachers so, in the opinion of many, it makes sense to capitalise on these during appraisal. Would it not make more sense to utilise a more obvious presence during classroom observation - pupils? There can be no objection to pupil appraisal of classes in terms of the quality of children's observations because there is no doubt that pupils have a consistent view of teachers. Their perceptions "are of paramount importance and are likely to be a major influence on their behaviour in school and their attitudes towards education" (Keys and Fernandes 1992).

Pupils are very clear about what they think good teachers do. They think that good teachers are slightly firm, though not over-strict, and they are certainly not permissive. They must be fair, rather than unfair, in their use of rewards and punishments; the professional skill they value above all others is the ability to explain clearly; they like people who have a sense of humour but do not use sarcasm; and they also like teachers who are interested in them as individuals and do not just teach them as a whole group (Powney 1991 *ibid*).

Some teachers already conduct pupil surveys as an instrument to get pupils' views of their teaching and, from an appraisal point of view, this could be the most valuable type of evidence. A pupil survey questionnaire could be issued, stating clearly that the results will help the teacher to see how well he/she is meeting the pupils' needs and to help plan future lessons. The responses would be anonymous and the pupils would be assured that no attempt would be made to identify respondents.

While pupils perceptions may well be very consistent, the idea of using them for teacher appraisal, however, meets objections on ethical and professional grounds. Teachers may not want to feel that their own charges, mature or immature, are contributing to appraisal information which might, one day, determine their promotional prospects or their salary.

### *Performance pay*

Only two respondents in the survey actually mentioned a link between pay and appraisal whereas, in a study recently undertaken in England (SCRE 1994), informants had indicated that possible links with pay and promotion were their main concerns about appraisal. Their concerns may be justified as the final report, in 1991, of the Interim Advisory Committee (IAC) on teachers' pay stated:

We certainly do not envisage an automatic or precise relationship between appraisal and pay. But it seems to us that information about appraisal could properly be taken into account, along with other evidence, in taking decisions whether to award discretionary payments. Indeed it would be unfair to teachers to discount it...

(Morris, 1991 *ibid*)

In 1994 Mr Eric Forth, the schools minister, called for teachers' pay to be more centralised, and linked more closely to performance. In a letter to the School Teachers' Review Body, the quango which advises the government on setting teachers' pay in England and Wales, he said that he wanted the body to report on "how the pay of all school teachers might be more closely related to individual performance, and what measures might be taken to

ensure that pay discretions are used for this purpose" (Authers, 1994).

Experiences in industry and commerce have shown, however, that, once staff were encouraged to focus their main attention on prospects for pay increases or for preferment, defensive strategies and self-preservation tactics were more likely to characterise management-staff relations than frank discussion on development needs and performance improvement (Campbell, 1990 *ibid*).

### *Other relevant information for appraisal*

Through the analysis of surveys about relationships and effectiveness of interactions with pupils, teachers may become aware of possible changes and improvements to classroom practice and teaching performance. This remains, however, only one aspect of information relevant for appraisal, which falls into a number of broad categories common to all schools and stages:

Awareness of regional and school policies and contributions to staff discussions and policy implementation;

Relationships with colleagues, parents and others, including attitudes and communication style as a teacher and a manager;

Teaching methodologies and attention to individuals, groups and class activities. This would involve questioning techniques and handling of pupil discussion;

Classroom organisation and management of resources for teaching and learning;

Administration of class, stage or department record-keeping and reporting and the effectiveness of written communications;

Response to advice and support and willingness to participate in school, departmental or cross-curricular development activities;

Professional development in taking up in-service opportunities and in monitoring and improving own practice;

Standards and style of work presented to the pupils;



Standards of the work of pupils, information on progress and teacher expectation;

Types of assessment employed and correction policy and style;

The balance and breadth of the curriculum and reactions to new developments and openness to innovation;

Appropriateness, effectiveness and consistency of class discipline and adherence to school policy;

Contribution to life and work of school and acceptance of delegated tasks.

(MSD&A Support Unit 3 1991)

The appraisal of each individual teacher requires the collection and collation of information relating to each aspect of their individualised job description over the whole period under review. The *individualised job description* is, therefore, the principal focus for the collection of appraisal information and several respondents in the survey mentioned the difficulty in clarifying their multi-functional roles.

### *Individualised job description*

All teachers have basic job descriptions but, for the purpose of appraisal, there is a need to go a stage further in order to take account of those detailed tasks which are specific to the individual. All staff have different patterns of accountability and, therefore, the job description on which appraisal is based has to reflect the specific tasks and responsibilities of the individual teacher. There is no common format for *individualised job descriptions* in use in Scotland but elements would include:

title of post;

basic function involving a clear and concise statement of the overall role of the post holder;

a statement of accountability specifying to whom the post holder is directly responsible, for example PT, AHT or DHT;

an indication of the staff who are accountable to the post holder;

an indication of the people, within and outwith school, with whom the post holder works;

statements about key tasks which the post holder fulfils, normally subdivided into areas such as teaching; curriculum development; pastoral and guidance roles; advising and support roles; management, administration and school development; liaison and communication;

statements reflecting the ways in which performance of the key tasks might be judged. These statements might be qualitative or quantitative.

(MSD&A Support Unit 3 1991)

The value of the *individualised job description*, however, extends beyond the appraisal process. It can help to clarify for the staff involved the precise nature of their duties and the expectations held of them. It can also make an important contribution to motivation and job satisfaction by recognising the full scope of the teacher's contribution to the school.

## **Problems with appraisal**

### *Assuming too much?*

Some of the problems of staff appraisal lie in its underlying assumptions. It is claimed that staff appraisal contributes to individual development as well as organisational planning but what if the organisation's goals are not compatible with those of the individual employee? Staff appraisal cannot communicate away such conflicts of interest.

The introduction of a staff appraisal system may arouse expectations among employees which cannot be met. A secondary school AHT, with 32 years experience, expressed concern about "*the inability of the Region to meet all the needs and staff development courses identified*" during the appraisal discussion.

The reality of a staff appraisal interview may not live up to the rhetoric. Appraisers may be embarrassed, inept, unwilling to express criticism, or take

refuge in bland and generalised assessments. The appraisee may agree too readily with the appraiser's comments or, at the other extreme, respond in a resentful, over-defensive or otherwise uncooperative manner. As one PT observed, after having had experience as an appraiser, the interview *"could be embarrassing if you are appraising a colleague who takes constructive comment as criticism and, subsequently, holds a grudge"*.

Staff appraisal involves real costs, in terms of man-hours, voluminous paperwork, and increased bureaucracy. The many comments from respondents concerning the need for adequate resourcing seem to confirm the findings in Lothian Region's Staff Development and Appraisal Response to National Guidelines:

A central feature of the Staff Development and Appraisal Implementation Plan has been the identification of the cost implications for the introduction of this process. It is apparent from consultation with all sectors of the service in Lothian Region that staff at all levels view adequate resourcing as the essential prerequisite for success. In the past many initiatives have foundered on the rock of inadequate provision. It would be a great pity if this scheme, which has the potential to bring much of value to pupils, were to be lost or demeaned through lack of support.

As one primary school HT succinctly put it, *"I can't see how (appraisal) can be retained if adequate time or money is not available"*.

The teaching unions have said from the outset that there were considerable cost implications in establishing and, in particular, maintaining a successful appraisal system for teachers. In January 1995 the Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association pointed out that there appears to have been sufficient funds overall to respond to training needs for those undertaking training as tutors and for some of those to be trained as appraisers. However, for some appraisers, and appraisees in particular, resources in terms of time have not been made available.

What is still more worrying, and calls the whole exercise into question, is the fact that staff development needs arising from the Appraisal process simply cannot be met by local authorities who have already

been able to appraise their staff.

The situation is...if the SOED was not fully aware of the cost implications and, indeed had not done its sums properly, thinking after the initial funding, local authorities could meet any other costs themselves...then the whole costly exercise will simply wither on the vine and the perceived benefits will evaporate.

(SSTA 1995)

The implications of Local Government Reorganisation in Scotland in 1996 combined with the introduction of Devolved School Management (DSM), when individual schools will take responsibility for almost all of their budgets, including staff development, may add to the problems of financing the consequences of such open and honest debate proposed by the appraisal system.

If the costs are seen to outweigh the benefits, then staff appraisal may well degenerate into a cynical ritual, disliked by both appraisers and appraisees. Much depends upon the support given by top management. If they are seen to attach real value to staff appraisal, if they develop its linkages to other managerial processes, if they insist on appraisals being followed up in terms of training opportunities, and if assessed performance is reflected in career advancement, then staff appraisal may become an accepted and valued practice, as is the case in many other organisations.

## **Implications**

The introduction of appraisal systems in the UK has resulted in an awareness of changing attitudes and needs among many teachers and educational establishments. Preparation for appraisal and staff development is popularising the use of *professional development profiles* among teachers and encouraging schools to consider *investing in people* and examine the key elements of *total quality management*.

### *Professional development profiles (PDP)*

A *professional development profile* is an ongoing record of qualifications,

training experiences and professional development. It provides a means of analysing experience to date, determining current skills and abilities and planning future progress. Teachers are beginning to appreciate that the PDP structured approach to professional development builds on strengths, develops new skills and improves teaching and learning. The process of recording and documenting involved in PDPs also serves to provide evidence for explicit recognition of past and current achievements.

A PDP contains any information which an individual teacher considers relevant to their professional life. This could include:

- personal details;
- qualifications;
- employment history;
- a job description of current and previous posts;
- a record of professional development experiences;
- an analysis of professional experiences;
- self evaluation of professional competence;
- appraisal record and probationary report;
- professional development plan.

The elements of a PDP should be updated and reviewed on a regular basis and this framework for recording achievements to date and identifying routes to further progress may enhance the preparation of staff for appraisal .

### *Investors in People (IIP)*

*Investors in People* is an increasingly popular scheme which offers national recognition and was launched in 1991 to encourage employers to increase the quality and quantity of staff training and development. Unlike some other quality management schemes, such as the *British Standard 5750* which is geared to production based industry and more concerned with top-down quality control, the main focus of IIP is people rather than systems and this is why many schools, particularly in England and Wales but becoming popular in Scotland, have taken it up.

It is a scheme developed in industry and a central element of IIP is the

establishment of a link between a school development plan and a policy for staff development. It helps with the management of change which all schools are facing, and many schools are making appraisal and training the central core of their IIP action plans. IIP schools are linking in-service training both to their own strategic needs and to individual staff needs revealed through appraisal. Staff reaction has been positive in the schools that have gone down the IIP road (Hall and O'Connor 1994).

### *Total Quality Management (TQM)*

Total quality management is an approach to strategic management and quality service development for school-wide quality improvement. It is a comprehensive management philosophy, which schools are adopting from companies and organisations, and it seeks to clarify the role of the in-school leadership team and others. TQM is in part linked to the need to improve performance on such things as attendance, academic achievement, social behaviour, self-esteem and other variables commonly used in studies of school effectiveness (Reynolds, 1980). These outcomes, however, are consequences of other, more critical objectives, which include:

- Establishing and sustaining a strong sense of vision about the school and its purposes and climate.

- Promoting personal mastery learning for all learners in the organisation.

- Driving the schools strategy as close to its pupils as it can get.

- Creating challenges and goals dedicated to achieving change within the school.

- Working effectively through teams, both cross-functional and top-to-bottom, as the basis for development.

- Improving the quality of daily management in the school.

TQM is a powerful framework that is being applied in both public and private sector institutions "with remarkable benefits" (Murgatroyd, 1992) and the potential application to the management of schools and school systems is considerable (Hill, 1992).

## ***Conclusions***

### ***Relevance and benefit***

In this survey, three quarters of the Lothian Region appraised teachers who returned a completed questionnaire felt that appraisal had relevance to everyday working life and **more than** three quarters felt that appraisal had been of some benefit to them. Eighty one percent want appraisal to be retained.

Like bank staff, civil servants and many others who are regularly appraised, teachers will have the opportunity to discuss their careers, seek advice on problems and gain feedback on progress within the confidentiality of the appraisal interview. Such interviews should provide an opportunity for reflection on previous work with the aim of agreeing plans for the future. It is potentially a sensitive occasion, dealing as it does with matters at the heart of a teacher's career and job. It is also an occasion which can trigger further professional development and growth. Such development arises in part from the way appraisal can prompt reflection and increase self-awareness. It also arises from the potential of the process for clarifying aims and priorities and bringing about a clearer definition of responsibilities.

### ***Lesson from industry***

The world of education has learned from the quality and quantity of staff training and development in industry, adopting comprehensive, top-down systems of staff appraisal, as most schools depend very heavily on senior people being able to observe lessons and grade teachers who are in more "menial" positions. There is nothing disastrously wrong with that, as long as it is done in a supportive way, but industry is moving away from heavily top-down mechanistic types of schemes (page 12). A number of studies on appraisal systems in industry have recommended the use of multiple raters (Kleinaman, 1981) and pointed out the contribution that upward appraisal can make to more accurate and objective assessments of managers

(Bernadin, 1984). Perhaps education authorities will progress to even more radical methods of staff appraisal now being considered by industrialists.

### *360-degree feedback*

When industry and commerce first began to look at the possibilities in staff appraisal, as discussed in chapter 2, personnel departments created traditional top-down job appraisal. Then upward appraisal was introduced to give a more balanced view of an individual's performance. Now many UK companies either have, or are considering introducing, an appraisal system that uses information from above, below and to the side, known as *360-degree feedback*. Managers, peers and subordinates all give their views on an individual's performance, in a process that, many argue, is the logical extension of appraisal methodology as firms move towards less hierarchy and require more open and informative communications channels (Dugdill, 1994).

360-degree feedback evolved from its origins in the US army in the 1970s, when military researchers found that the opinions of peers were more accurate indicators of a soldier's ability than the opinions of superiors. Those organisations that have well-established *360-degree feedback* systems are refining its use for management development but the mechanics of *360-degree feedback* are simple. An audit of a manager's skills is taken by giving questionnaires to a manager's boss, and to a number of peers and subordinates. Answers are analysed for any skills gaps and suitable training or self-improvement follows. If a similar appraisal system was presently employed in Lothian Region then perhaps more than fifteen percent of respondents would have been told something during their interview that was a surprise to them.

The general thrust behind the move to *360-degree feedback* comes as organisations take a harsh view of too much hierarchy, and only those firms that are willing to break down these traditional hierarchies will benefit from this new appraisal system. But even if the organisational culture is right, do



employees who take part in the appraisals feel encouraged enough to be open and honest about their superior, who may be a member of the senior management team?

Personnel directors and consultants agree that respondents **do** open up; they understand that it is in their best interests to be as honest as possible as the process is one which is genuinely trying to improve the way in which work is done. Perhaps education departments will see the introduction of a similar appraisal system for senior management teams in years to come. The important point to be made, however, is that, for any staff appraisal scheme to be effective, all concerned must be able to air their views and give honest opinions. Debate is essential if the scheme is not to have little or no effect upon staff contributing in a positive way to the achievements of their school.

### *The value of the individual*

In industry the emphasis, more and more, is on flattened hierarchies, teamwork, continuous improvement and valuing the individual. This philosophy of treating an employee as an individual is fundamental to personnel and pay policy and practice in modern industry (IRS 570, 1994). Business organisational models are now shifting around to the humane and person-centred approach and industry has realised that the answer is to have people who are more creative and resourceful. In education, people have just been made to work harder. (Haig, 1994)

There is a tremendous standard of care and professionalism that many companies are putting into developing individuals and it outstrips anything happening in education. Professional development is becoming an increasingly important feature of the educational system and schools can learn from industry, particularly in the areas of professional development, quality programmes and a willingness to be creative and reinvent the organisation so that it responds to the world. The key is to take the best of business practice, without losing sight of the educational vision.

Some teachers may be dissatisfied with the appraisal system, finding the procedures that have been established limited and even tokenistic. Others may come to appreciate that appraisal is more than simply classroom observation or the appraisal interview but, to have the necessary impact both for the individual teacher and the school, it has to be embedded into the rhythm of the school's day to day activities (Hopkins et al 1991). Schools which have wide experience of staff development practices have found that appraisal has an important role to play, particularly at the needs development stage, and schools which have an ethos of positive enthusiasm and communication have a distinct advantage in appraisal.

Appraisal has led to a greater coherence in schools with improvements to communications (Mortimore and Mortimore, 1991 *ibid*) and it has also made people look critically at their career aspirations, or given them new confidence to apply for posts. The most positive comment made by many staff who returned completed questionnaires in my survey was an appreciation of the opportunity to reflect on the job and discuss feelings and future aspirations with a like-minded colleague. An upper primary teacher summed up the feelings of many when he/she stated that *"in the day-to-day running of a busy school there is not much time for promoted staff to give any feedback (unless of course there is a problem). It is good for staff morale to have achievements acknowledged and recognised"*.

A secondary HT emphasised the two-way flow of information and observation when he/she commented that the appraisal meeting *"certainly provided a structured opportunity to reflect on the job and to get feedback from staff"*. Another secondary HT commented that, for the first time as a Head Teacher, appraisal provided the opportunity *"to sit down with someone from the Education Department and talk about the school, where I wanted to develop initiatives, strengths etc., as well as discuss my own professional development"*.

Teacher and educational performance has always been assessed and will continue to be so. What is new is the attempt to make this assessment more visible, more formal, more structural and more imposed than ever before (Neville, 1989). Appraisal does not exist in isolation but its long term impact seems likely to depend on how far it is integrated with other strategies for review and development. Perhaps some staff are right to feel threatened. Or perhaps by working together and accepting the positive and developmental aspects of appraisal, teachers could find that the many and varied indicators of performance are simply very useful, and perhaps even friendly, tools to assist them in the management of their schools.

Above all, the purpose of teacher appraisal is ultimately to improve the learning of pupils in the classroom.

We teach so that children may learn. If what we do as teachers does not help children to learn, to acquire the skills, knowledge, competencies and attitudes that are the aims of education, then it is pointless. If we are to appraise teachers we must appraise their ability to help pupils learn and not other irrelevant matters.

(Dockrell, 1986)

As the number of those appraised increases, and as the experience and general skill level of both appraisers and appraisees increases, children should benefit from the added professionalism and more reflective teachers. In schools, whenever learning and teaching are put at the centre of management, things have gone right rather than wrong.

Although more than three quarters of appraisees in my survey felt that appraisal had been of some benefit to them, the signs are that appraisal of teachers in Scotland will not be a priority after Regional Reorganisation in April 1996. Dr Malcolm Green, education convener of the shadow council in Glasgow, has claimed that the benefits of appraisal, much stressed by the Government, were uncertain and that it would add to teachers' workload. In a recent article (Henderson, 1995) he is quoted as saying:

Unless (appraisal) leads to positive outcomes, there is no point in doing it. The whole process is winding down...

Appraisal training

(please tick)

- 1 a Did you receive appraisal basic training?
- b Did you find it useful?
- 2 Was the allocated time sufficient?
- 3 Did you make use of the SOED Interactive Video Pack "Skills for Appraisal Interviewing"?
- 4 If yes, did you find it useful?

yes	no

Appraisal interview

- 1 Did you prepare for your appraisal interview?
- 2 Did the interview involve some degree of self-evaluation?
- 3 Was the period of notice given adequate for your preparation?
- 4 Were you satisfied with the physical conditions of your interview?
- 5 Were you satisfied with the location of your interview?
- 6 Were you told anything about your job performance that was a surprise to you?
- 7 How would you describe the general tone of the interview?  
(please circle appropriate words)

yes	no

helpful                      relaxed                      friendly                      uncomfortable                      embarrassing

interesting                      intimidating                      stressful                      aggressive                      negative

- 8 How long was your appraisal interview?  
(please circle appropriate time)

less than 1/2 hour                      1/2 to 1 hour                      1 to 2 hours                      more than 2 hours

- 9 What is your opinion about the length of the interview?  
(please circle appropriate comment)

not long enough                      about right                      too long

- 10 Were you given adequate freedom to put forward your views to the appraiser?
- 11 Did you experience conflict during the interview?
- 12 If yes, do you feel that this conflict was resolved by the end of the interview?
- 13 Do you feel that job targets had been agreed at the end of the interview?
- 14 If yes, do you feel that they had been agreed on a joint basis?
- 15 Do you feel that training needs had been identified at the end of the interview?
- 16 If yes, do you feel that training needs had been agreed at the end of the interview?

yes	no

1 How many years service do you have in teaching? \_\_\_\_\_

2 Please circle the sector you teach in.

primary                      secondary                      tertiary

3 If primary, please circle at which level you teach.

infant                      middle                      upper                      combination

4 Are you in a promoted post?

5 If yes, please circle which post: APT, ST, PT, AHT, DHT, HT.

Post-appraisal

1 Has appraisal brought about professional development?

2 Has appraisal improved your teaching performance?

3 Has appraisal changed your classroom practice?

4 Do you feel that appraisal has relevance to your everyday working life?

5 Should the appraisal system be retained?

6 If yes, should it be retained in its present form?

7 Do you have any reservations about the appraisal system?  
(please comment if you wish)

8 Has appraisal been of benefit to you?  
(please comment if you wish)

9 Please add any further comments you would like to make.

yes	no

yes	no

yes	no

Holy Rood High School  
Duddingston Road West  
Edinburgh  
EH15 3ST  
May 1995

Dear Colleague

Teacher Appraisal Questionnaire

I am undertaking a small research project as part of my MEd dissertation and, as one of the few Lothian teachers who have actually been appraised, I would appreciate your cooperation in completing the attached questionnaire.

I do appreciate the ever-increasing workload and never-ending paperwork that is part of our teaching lives and, therefore, I have tried to keep the responses to a simple yes/no format. There are, however, opportunities for comments and any observations and perceptions would certainly be appreciated.

I equally appreciate the sensitivity of some of the questions and, therefore, I ask you not to write any names on the questionnaire.

On completion, the questionnaire can be sent to me, in the envelope provided, at the above address using the internal mailing system.

Thank you for your help and cooperation.

Yours faithfully

Laurie McAlindin

### Appendix 3

Holy Rood High School  
Duddingston Road West  
Edinburgh  
EH15 3ST  
24 March 1995

Tom McMillan  
Assistant Director of Education  
(Monitoring and Evaluation)  
Westwood House  
498 Gorgie Road  
Edinburgh EH11 3AF

Dear Mr McMillan

I am undertaking a small research project as part of my part-time MEd dissertation at Edinburgh University and I would appreciate your assistance. I have been informed by Peter McCourt, SD&A secondary school coordinator, that any research has to be discussed and approved by a committee at Westwood House.

I enclose, for your consideration, a copy of a questionnaire and relevant letters that I wish to send to teaching staff in Lothian Schools. I understand that, if the research is approved, then all schools will be informed by your department and I can then proceed.

Verification of the research project can be obtained from:

Professor Noel Entwistle  
University of Edinburgh  
Department of Education  
10 Buccleuch Place  
Edinburgh EH8 9JT  
Tel. 0131 650 4327

I thank you in anticipation and look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely

Laurie McAlindin  
APT Guidance

Holy Rood High School  
Duddingston Road West  
Edinburgh  
EH15 3ST  
May 1995

Dear Head Teacher

Teacher Appraisal Questionnaire

As I explained during our telephone conversation, I am undertaking a small research project as part of my MEd dissertation and I would appreciate you and your staff's cooperation in completing the attached questionnaire.

I do appreciate the ever-increasing workload and never-ending paperwork that is part of our teaching lives and, therefore, I have tried to keep the responses to a simple yes/no format. There are, however, opportunities for comments and any observations and perceptions would certainly be appreciated.

I equally appreciate the sensitivity of some of the questions and I ask you to emphasise the anonymity of the responses. **Names should not be written anywhere on the questionnaire.**

On completion, the questionnaires can be returned to me at the above address by individual teachers in the envelopes provided, using the internal mailing system.

Thank you for your help and cooperation and please convey my thanks to your staff.

Yours sincerely

Laurie McAlindin



## Bibliography

- ACAS 1986** *Teachers' Dispute ACAS Independent Panel: Report of the Appraisal Working Group.*
- Anderson G., Hume D. and Young E. 1987** *Appraisal Without Form Filling* Personnel Management V 1, 19.
- Authers J 1994** *Schools Minister backs performance-pay link* Financial Times 12 August 1994.
- Bernadin H.J. and Beatty R.W. 1984** *Performance Appraisal: assessing human behaviour at work*, Kent, Boston MA.
- Bernadin H.J. 1986** *Subordinate Appraisal: A Valuable Source of Information about Managers* Human Resource Management V 25 pp 421 - 39.
- Campbell J.A. 1990** *Staff Development and Appraisal: How do they do it?* Northern College of Education .
- Civil Service 1985** *Training Manual* Open Tech/MSO.
- Clarke Rt Hon K. 1991** *Speech to North of England Education Conference* DES Press Notice 2/91 para 44, 4 January 1991.
- Clift P. Nuttall D.L. and Mc Cormick R. (Eds) 1987** *Studies in School Self-Evaluation* Falmer, Basingstoke.
- Cochrane L 1995** *Clydesdale Staff set to Strike* The Scotsman, 17 February 1995.
- Cole G. 1993** *Screening the Staff* The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland), 10 September 1993.
- DES 1983** *Teaching Quality Cmnd. 8836* HMSO, London.
- DES 1986** *Better Schools: evaluation and appraisal conference* HMSO, London.
- DES 1989** *The Green Book: School Teacher Appraisal:- a national framework, The Report of the National Steering Group*, HMSO, London.
- DES 1990a** *Paper for IAC on coverage of Appraisal Regulations under section 49 of the Education (No 2) Act 1986* December 1990, mimeograph, Mortimore.

**DES 1990b** MacGregor J. *Appraisal* DES News 297/90.

**DES 1990c** Clarke K. *Teacher Appraisal to be Compulsory* DES News 389/90

**Dockrell W 1986** *Appraisal: Problems of assessing pupils' learning* Scottish Council for Research in Education.

**Dugdill G 1994** *Wide Angle View* Personnel Today, 27 September 1994.

**Fletcher C. and Williams R. 1985** *Performance Appraisal and Career Development*, Hutchinson.

**Fowler A 1991** *How to Conduct Appraisals* IPM Plus V 2, 6 pp 22 - 23.

**French R., Holdzkom D. and Kuligowski B. 1990** *Teacher Evaluation in SREB States, Stage 1, Paper presented at 1990 AERA Conference Boston, USA.*

**Haigh G. 1994** *Managing not to be Macho* The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland) 13 May 1994.

**Hall J. and O'Connor M. 1994** *How to set your own quality standards* The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland), 21 October 1994.

**Henderson D. 1995** *Appraisal Falls Victim to Council Shake-up* The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland), 18 August 1995.

**Hill S. 1991** *Why quality circles failed but total quality might succeed* British Journal of Industrial Relations v 29, 4 pp 541 - 68.

**Hilton P 1992** *Letting Staff Express Themselves* Performance Management Plus V 3, 5 pp 22 - 23.

**Hogg C. 1988** *Performance Appraisal* Management Factsheet No 3, March 1988 p4.

**Hoole C. 1659/1868** *Scholastic Discipline* American Journal of Education v 17.

**Hopkins D. et al 1991** *Teacher Appraisal, Professional Development and School Improvement: a case study* School Organisation V 11, 1 pp 37 - 53.

**Humphreys K. 1992** *"I must be crackers". Teacher Self-Appraisal for professional Development: reflections based on a case study of a group of teachers* School Organisation V 12, 2 pp 165 - 174.

**IRS 479 1992 *Pay and Benefits Bulletin 314*** Industrial Relations Service Employment Trends 479.

**IRS 556 1994 *Improving Performance? A Survey of Appraisal Arrangements*** Industrial Relations Service Employment Trends 556.

**IRS 559 1994 *Performance Appraisal Assessed*** Industrial Relations Service Employment Trends 559.

**IRS 560 1994 *Performance Pay Gives Ground to Performance Management*** Industrial Relations Service Employment Trends 560.

**IRS 570 1994 *Pick and Mix Appraisal: individual choice of performance reviews at Mercury*** Industrial Relations Service Employment Trends 570.

**Kleinaman L. and Dercham R.L. 1981 *Performance Appraisal: promotion and the courts; a critical review*** Personnel Psychology V 34 pp 103 - 21.

**Lanza P. 1985 *Team Appraisals*** Personnel Journal V 64, 3 pp 47 - 51.

**Lathan G.P. and Wexley K.N. 1982 *Increasing Productivity through Performance Appraisal***, Addison-Wesley, Reading MA.

**Lawton D. 1987 *Teaching Quality, Quality Teaching and the Culture of the School: the 1986 Sera Lecture*** Scottish Educational Review V 19, 1 pp 3 - 12.

**Lockett J. 1992 *Effective Performance Management***, Kegan Page, London.

**Lòng P. 1986 *Performance Appraisal Revisited*** IPM.

**LRC 1991a *Staff Development and Appraisal Response to National Guidelines***, Lothian Regional Council.

**LRC 1991b *Management Training for Head teachers, Staff Development and Appraisal Training Resources:Activities***; Management Development Unit, SOED December 1991, HMSO.

**LRC 1993 *Staff Development and Appraisal: guidelines for teaching staff***. Lothian Regional Council, Department of Education, March 1993.

**LRC 1994 *SD&A Implementation Programme***, Quality Assurance Bulletin February 1994.

**McMahon J. 1990** *Staff Appraisal Schemes*, Administrator December 1990

**McLeod D. 1989** *Keeping Teachers up to the Mark* The Scotsman 24 February 1989.

**MacGregor J. 1989** *Speech to the Conference of the Secondary Heads Association.*

**Macleod M. 1986** *Appraisal and Evaluation: fantasy or practicality?* Education Management and Administration 14 pp 169 - 189

**Marks and Spencer plc 1987** *Appraisal Training* Department.

**Marland M. 1986** *Appraisal and Evaluation: fantasy or practicality?* Education Management and Administration, 14 pp 169 - 189.

**Mitchell J. 1994** *Turn on, tune in and develop* The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland), 7 October 1994.

**Morris B. 1991** *Schoolteacher Appraisal: Reflections on recent history* Educational Management and Administration V 19, 3 pp 167 - 71.

**Mortimore P. and Mortimore J. 1991** *Teacher Appraisal: back to the future* School Organisation V 11, 2 pp 125 - 143.

**MSD&A 1991** *Management of Staff Development and Appraisal Module.*

**Munn P. and Drewer E. 1990** *Using questionnaires in small scale research: a teacher's guide* Scottish Council for Research in Education.

**Murgatroyd S. 1992** *A New Frame for Managing Schools: Total Quality management (TQM)* School Organisation V 12, 2 pp 175 - 200.

**National Westminster Bank plc 1985** *Guidance Notes for Reporting and Appraising, Management Development*, Personnel Division.

**NCITT 1984** *Arrangements for Staff Development of Teachers. A report submitted to the Secretary of State for Scotland*, SOED.

**Neville T 1989** *Assessing Performance* School Organisation V 9, 3 pp 359 - 364.

**Nevels P. 1989** *Why employees are being asked to rate their supervisors* Supervisory Management, December 1989 pp 5 - 11.

**Norman C. A. and Zawacki R. A. 1991 *Team Appraisals - Team Approach*** Personnel Journal V 70, 9 pp 101 - 102, 104.

**NUT 1980 *A Fairway Forward*** Hamilton Mouse, London.

**OECD 1993 *Compulsory Schooling in a Changing World*** DES.

**Powney J. 1991 *Teacher Appraisal: the case for a developmental approach*** Educational Research V 33, 2 pp 83 - 92.

**Ramsay H. 1991 *Reinventing the Wheel? A Review of the Development and Performance of Employee Involvement*** Human Resource Management Journal V 1, 4 pp 1 - 22.

**Randall C., Packard P. and Slater J. 1984 *Staff Appraisal*** IPM.

**Redman T. and Snape E. 1992 *Upward and Onward: can staff appraise their managers?*** Personnel Review V 21, 7 pp 32 - 46.

**Reynolds D.R. 1982 *The Search for Effective Schools*** School Organisation V 2,3 pp 215 - 237.

**Routledge M. D. and Dennison W. F. 1990 *Introducing Appraisal - what has been achieved?*** School Organisation V 10, 1 pp 51 - 56.

**SCRE 1994 *Two heads are better than one*** Scottish Council for Research in Education, Newsletter 54 Spring 1994.

**Sims H. P. and Dean J.W. 1985 *Beyond Quality Circles: self-management teams*** Personnel, January 1985.

**SOED 1989 *School Teachers' Professional Development in the 1990s*** SOED.

**SOED 1991a *National Guidelines for Staff Development and Appraisal in Schools***, HMSO

**SOED 1991b *Staff Development and Appraisal in Schools: an information leaflet for teachers*** SOED.

**SSTA 1995 *Another "we told you so"; Staff Development and Appraisal*** The Secondary Teacher V 9, 1 January 1995.

**Stein N. 1991 *Remember, the Staff is the Bread of Life*** Management Today, July 1991 pp 58, 60.

**Thorburn I. 1994** *The Wragg Guide to Appraisal* The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland), 7 October 1994.

**Trevor G. 1993** *Pearls of Wisdom* Personnel Today, Reading Business Publishing.

**Turner G and Clift P. 1989** *Studies in Teacher Appraisal* Falmer Press, Basingstoke.

**Wilkie R. and Gunn L. 1980** *Staff Development in the 1980s* Strathclyde University, Glasgow.

**Wilson J. and Cole G. 1990** *A Healthy Approach to Performance Appraisal* Personnel Management V 22, 6 pp 46 - 49.

**Wohlers W. and London M. 1989** *Ratings of Managerial Characteristics: evaluation difficulty, co-worker agreement, and self-awareness* Personnel Psychology V 42 pp 235 - 61.

**Wragg E.C. 1987** *Teacher Appraisal* Scottish Educational Review V 19, 2 pp 76 - 85.

**Wragg T. 1994** *Under the Microscope* The Times Educational Supplement (Scotland), 9 September 1994.